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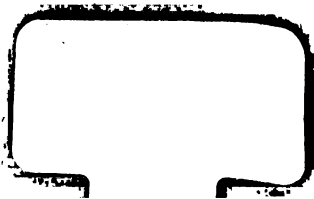
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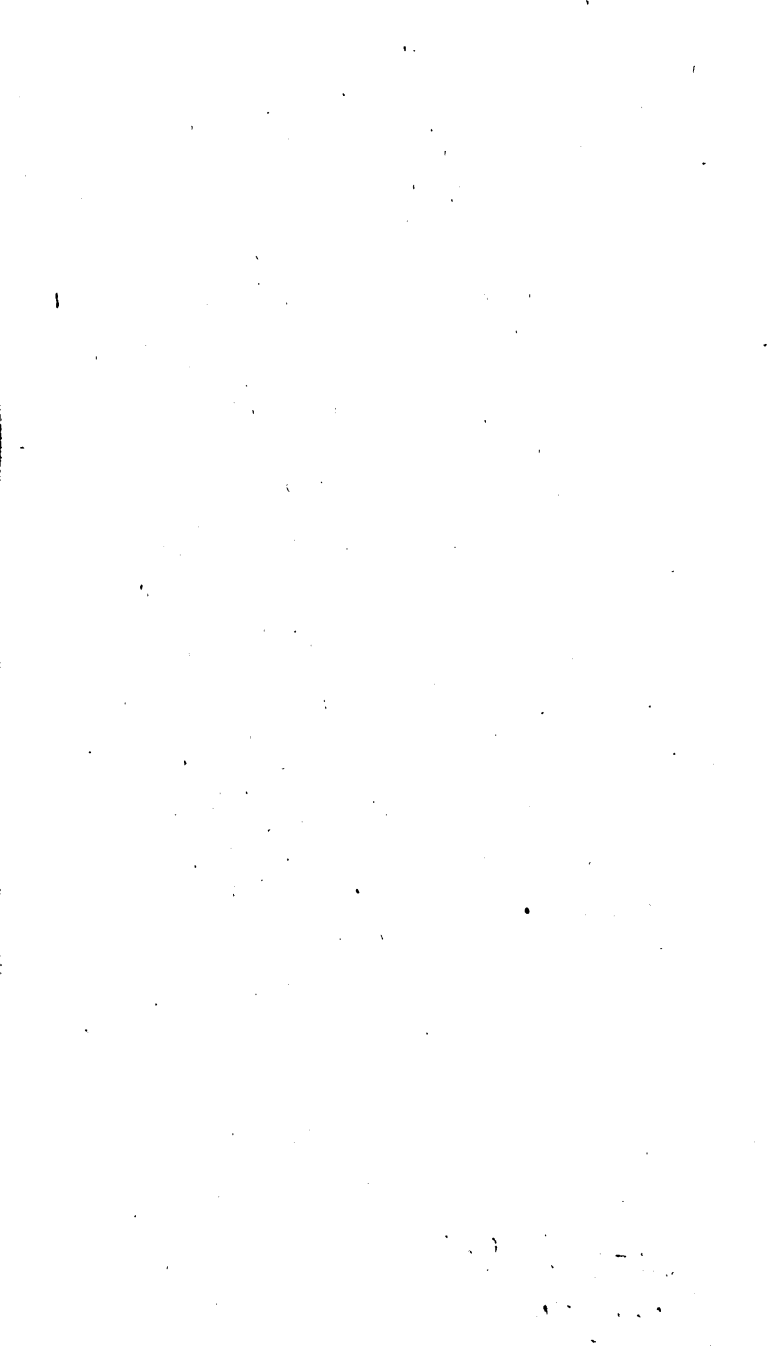


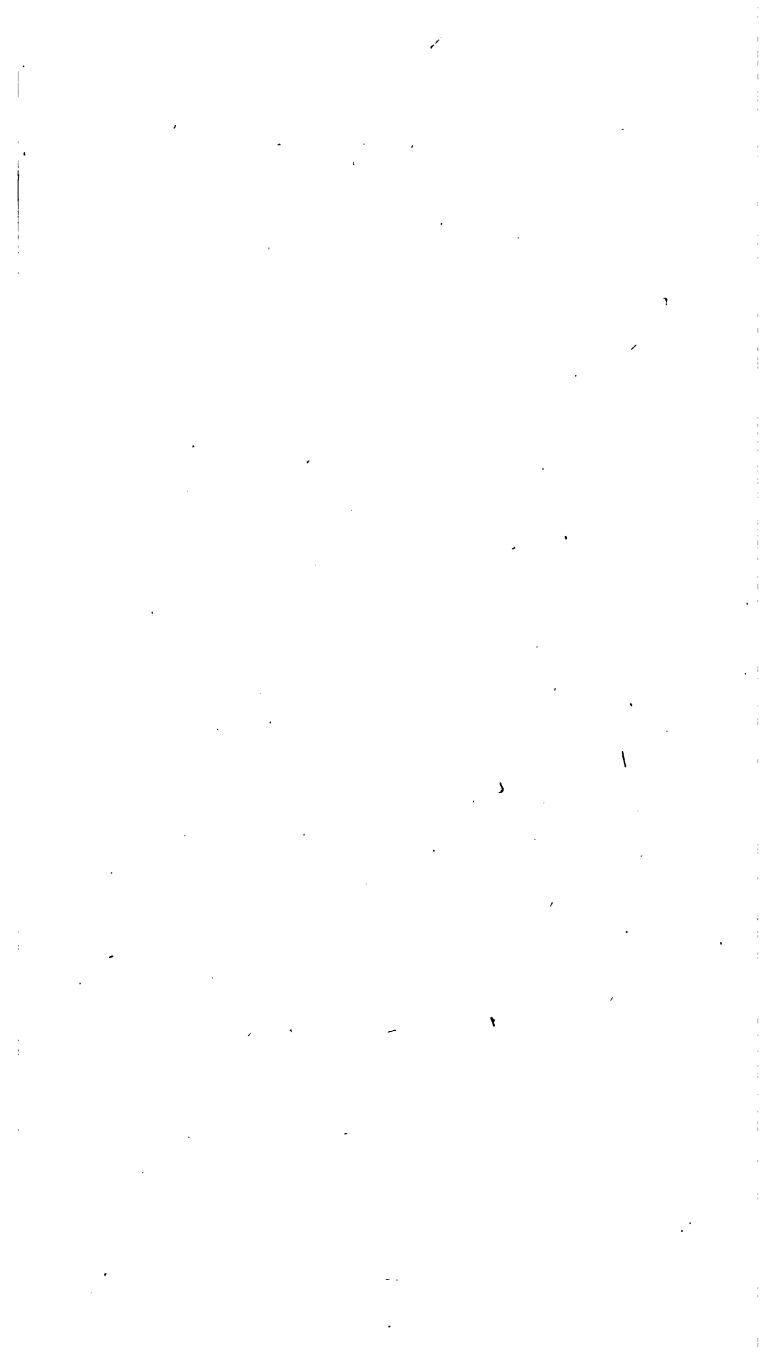
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MEPHISTOPHILES

IN

ENGLAND;

OR,

THE CONFESSIONS OF A PRIME MINISTER.

Ful many a man hath he begiled er this,
And wol, if that he may live any while :
And yet men gon and riden many a mile,
Him for to seke and have his acquaintance.

CHAUCER.

[by Robert Folkestone Williams.]

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

NEW-YORK:

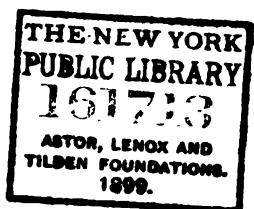
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DEDICATION

TO

THE IMMORTAL SPIRIT OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS

GOËTHE.

The earnest purposes of solemn thought
Awake the mind from dreamy lethargies ;
But with these aims a loftier end is wrought,

Mingling high hopes with noble sympathies.
Most good and glorious, most divine and true,
Of seraph shape and an unclouded hue,

Is the sweet vision this idea hath brought ;
And yet, though clothed in such rich braveries,
An awe,—a fear I cannot now subdue—

Weights down my heart in its humility.
For far, as yon fair cloud God's glory screens,
Above me seems the end I would attain,

And, doubtful of my own ability,
I shrink from the proud honour I would gain,—
The mind would rest upon its own tranquillity,

The breast ambitious feelings would restrain,
And I behold the space that intervenes
'Twixt loftiest wishes, and most humble means,

But thou, dear Spirit, from thy fond felicity
Among th' intellectual gods of earth,
Who in the heav'nly temples shrine their worth,

May not disdain the impulse I fulfil,
Nor seek a harvest in acknowledged dearth—
Forget the wants in kindness to the will.

For limning this wide sphere of deep duplicity,—
(Not the bright world that in its changes still
Recovers by a natural elasticity

To all the loveliness of excellence
With which 'twas robed by nature and her God,
But one in which the power of evil things

Eclipses there the pure intelligence
That is the Oread whence all sunshine springs,)—
I've shown its worthiness and its offence ;

And in so doing in thy path have trod,—
Might I but think beneath thy circling wings !
Sought thy attributes—exercised thy rod.

Then for the love I bear thee—for the pleasure
Thou hast most lib'rally bestowed—the treasure
Of thy laborious heaping I have gained—

The truth, the beauty, and the blessing found
Within thy pages naked and unchained—
The glowing fire which burneth in thy measure

Brighter than summer skies may flash around—
And the sweet comfort then most sweetly rained,
That gave humanity its vantage ground—

For the deep love I bear to thee and thine—
Unto thy social people wild and brave
With whom our *Shakspeare's* words are gifts divine ;

Thy land, and all its legendary learning—
Thy *Brocken's* mystic haunts—thy *Rhine's* proud wave,—
Thy *Hartz*, and the dark secrets it doth cave ;—

For these, and more than these, have I been yearning
To make unto thy fame some worthy sign,
And prove what good from thee my soul is earning.

And this hath led me with an eager zeal
To search the depths of that unplumbed abyss,
The human heart, in ev'ry wo and weal ;

To trace it to its vilest despotism,
Impelled by dreams ambition will reveal,
When Virtue, lost by an unnatural schism,

Lies struggling overpowered in fear and gyves ;
While showing how that influence unsubdued,
Whose prized existence is a thousand lives—

The power of goodness, purity, and truth,
Which liveth in an everlasting youth
Amid temptations, fears, and perils rude,

In its own sweet humanity survives,
And reconciles with *Love* th' impious feud.
Thus, too, I strove to woo the fair *Ideal*,

And somewhat into thy romantic haunt
Have ventured, tremulously, to advance ;
While with thy creatures shadowy and gaunt—

Forms that we hope belong not to the *Real*—
Have I made fellowship : but in romance
Have mingled matter more divine and feal,—

Things that *Truth* loves, and *Vice* could never daunt.

* * * * *

Lo ! the poor Doubter, while with look askance

Scanning the glories visible and oral,
Which *The Unseen* of Nature hath bestowed,
His weary soul groans with its perilous load.

Upon the brim of an invisible crater
He stands—his hopes have no abode,
And glimpses of a terrible avatar

Appear like monsters in the deep earth's strata.
He listens to the hymnings sweetly choral
That from the forest leaves are faintly stealing—

The stars are pointing out their blessed moral—
The air, though hushed to slumber, is not dumb—
His eyes are opened to a world of riches

In consolations, hopes, and noble feeling—
He seeth oracles in fields and ditches,
Set up like statues in appropriate niches,

That tell him *Man* is not such worthless scum
As he hath feared,—and with this wisdom filled,
He looks from this world to a world to come.

Then with what gladness is his Spirit thrilled !
From thoughts of sinfulness, and its inflictors,
To themes in which he hath been little skilled—

From Passion's triumphs unto Passion's victors—
From sordid dreams unto a heavenly vision—
From thinking God a consul with his lictors,

(The curse of a most cruel superstition,
A damnèd satire, an abhorred libel,)
Unto a perfect knowledge of the Good

Breathed over all things : taught us by the Sybil
In her old temples in the shadowy wood—
The everlasting hill—the rushing river—

The arch that ends the elements' collision ;
But plainer still developed by the Giver,
In characters that all have understood

Except the bigot and the evil liver,
In those Sybilline leaves of Truth, *The Bible* !
His soul is raised,—and now his eyes have wept

A stream of exquisite humiliation—
He owns his error—seeks conciliation—
And would into *His Father's* breast have crept

To seek in Heaven divine affiliation.
Thus in the trance in which conviction slept,
The natural truths of Life's abiding place

Do the dark shadowings of Doubt efface.
Then with what joy unchronicled th' *Elect*,
Whose eyes behold in ev'rything a meaning—

Whose spirit mid these glories walks erect—
Whose mind doth pierce the mists that truth is screening—
Whose heart hath been the home of good impressions,

And careth not for school, or church, or sect,
Receiveth ! Unto him the world's transgressions
Are a marvel—the reeds on which 'tis leaning

A terror—he maketh fond confessions
Unto the *Universal Parent*, singing
His praises in imperishable songs,

While from his breast all baser matter flinging ;
And as the prophets old to God's high wrongs
Awakened the insensate and the haters,

He, still with golden chords his harp new stringing,
 Makes known the bliss that to *His* name belongs,
 Humbles to earth tyrannical dictators,

Unchains the mute, and silences the praters.
 His task on earth below and heaven above
 Is one of peace, and gifted with this blessing,

(For Genius is God's messenger of love,)
 His heart doth cradle, for most fond caressing,
 All loving things that be,—from the fair stars—

Enigmas bright ! high source of idle guessing !
 Down to the yellow cups,—(the golden cars !)
 That in a lowlier dwelling star-like move.

No seer or prophet, Hebrew or Chaldean,
 With such sweet thoughts beheld these glorious signs.
 He seeth loveliness that nothing mars,

By the rude Baltic or the wild Egean.
 The lowly daises, and the antique pines,
 For him have comforts. In the murmur'ing voices

Of the soft air, sweet harmonies he hears—
 The loud winds shout their everlasting psalm—
 The Eye of Heaven in fadeless splendour shines ;

He hath no doubts, he hath no gloomy fears,
 His spirit in perpetual peace rejoices,
 His gaze an unpolluted gladness wears.

And from such gifted ones, of many choices,
 Should'st thou be chosen, all illustrious sage !
 How much by truth inspired, and virtue guided,

Didst thou enrich this intellectual age !
 A liberal largess gen'rously divided
 Unto the multitud'nous world of letters,

Warm-hearted German, hath thy love confided.
 And though thy nature, freed from carnal fetters,
 Hath now departed from this busy stage,

And left th' applauding audience much thy debtors,
 The mem'ry of thy greatness cannot fade,
 Thy strong impressions never can grow weaker ;

The worth thou gavest shall not be despised
 While hearts can throb to joy which thou hast made—
 While in the soul, the soul's fond dreams are prized—

While the young mind would be a treasure seeker.
 Filled to the brim shall be the foaming beaker ;
 And with a love that cannot be disguised—

A reverence that nothing can degrade—
 The youth, the old, the matron, and the maiden,
 In future times to *Goëthe's* name shall rise

And breathe the pray'rs with which their breasts are laden.
 Then, oh ! dear cynosure of sleepless eyes,
 Let not my humble homage be debarr'd

From gaining some small share of thy regard ;
 While tasting fountains which for thee have gushed,
 My spirit soared beyond the sapphire skies ;

And prophecies that were not to be hushed,
 And impulses no obstacles retard,
 And feelings high Hate would but has not crushed,

That rose within me in the quiet hours
 Reflection giveth to the world of dreams,
 Have urged me on, and with a hidden lever

Appeared to give the mind most welcome powers.
 Then as I walked, the mountains and the streams,
 The jewelled heavens, and earth's most precious flowers,

Seemed to have ties for me no power could sever,
 Which bound them to my loving heart for ever :
 While as I gazed all-wond'ring I had gleams

Of sunniest gladness, throwing a new light
 Within the teeming chambers of the brain,
 That gave unto my eyes a keener sight,

And made my nature rich with sterling gain.
 These golden gifts now seem to bridge the chasm
 That earth from heaven divides ; they put to flight

All human griefs. A sweet enthusiasm
 Hath loosened from mortality the chain
 That pressed upon my flesh with piercing spasm.

I am regardless now of self-denials,—
 On me the mem'ry of a life of trials
 Has lost its influence. I am grown blind

To all, save what is good and beautiful ;
 And in the steadfast love of these I find
 A bliss whose brightness Envy cannot dull.

Still may Hate pour on me its wrathful vials,
It makes no less my love of my own kind.
And when the winds that waft this bark may lull,

And o'er Eternity's unbounded waters
The vessel's sent adrift, if then with thee,
Circled by God's most honoured sons and daughters—

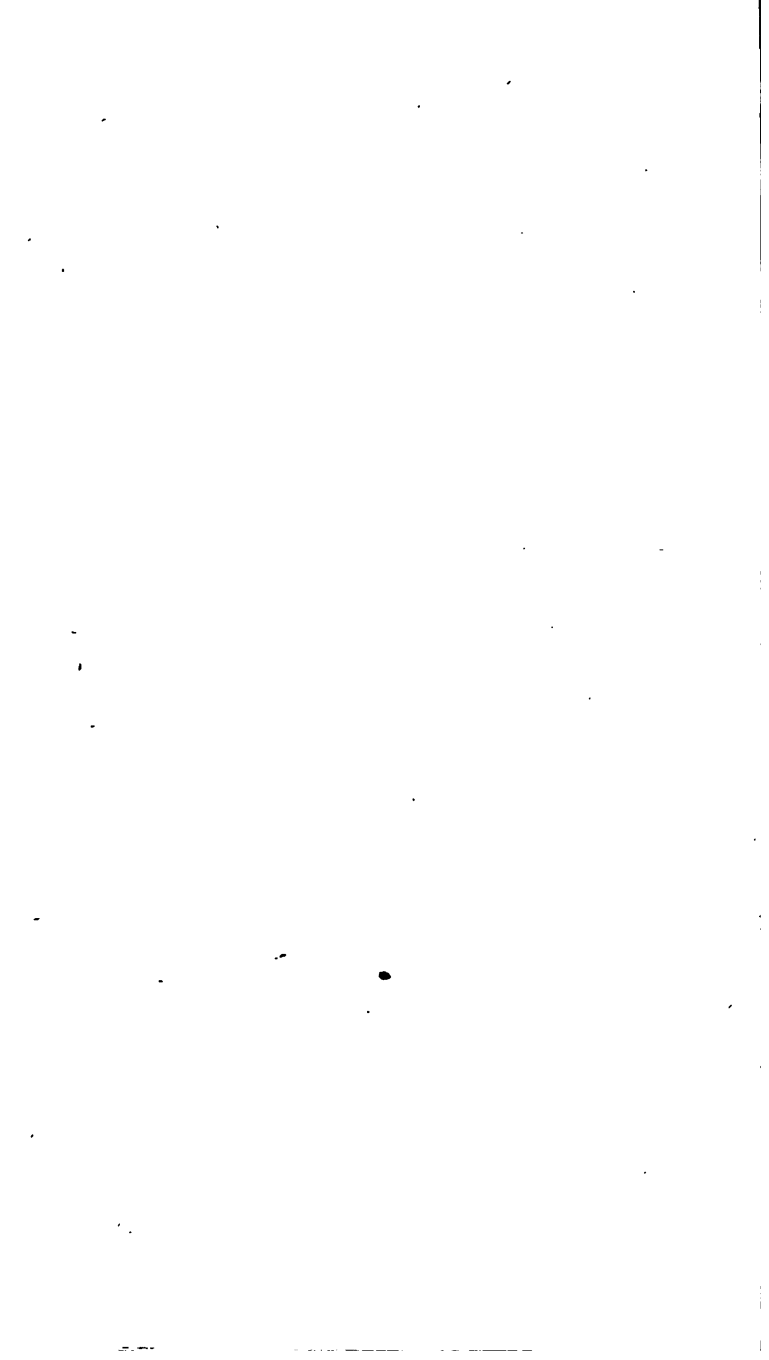
The galaxy of heaven, whose excellence
Is purified from human crimes and slaughters,
My soul in social fellowship should be,

It will not be without a good pretence
The voyage hath been made—nor yet quite free
From noble aims—though void of all offence.

The sign of incommunicable bliss
Upon thy gentle spirit ever dwell—
Still be thy name in loving accents spoken—

Though the magician useth no new spell,
Still may the charms we have remain unbroken :
And from thy world, when gazing upon this,

If thou in thy sweet praise one voice should miss,
In this poor offering regard the token
Of a more earnest worshipper. Farewell !



MEPHISTOPHILES

IN

ENGLAND.

BOOK THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

Considerations and qualifications of the author, and his confessions recommended to the reader's attention.—My ancestors and myself.—I discover a new relation through an accident, which promises at first to be attended with fearful consequences.—The curate of Herbert and his parishioners.—I become my cousin's instructor.—The sort of education I receive.—My college friend.—I proceed to the University of Gottingen.

I CONSIDER it a duty I owe society, to make public the circumstances of my life. The world learns by example, and follows the footsteps of those who attempt to direct its course, whether they lead to good or evil. I have trod the road of human existence at all seasons—in pleasure, in peril, in hope, and in despair; but always in error: therefore, if I cannot be considered a guide in the right path of life, I may confer some service by pointing out the dangers of the wrong one. The desire of searching into the nature of things hidden from the eye of human intelligence, tempted my spirit to its own destruction, as the bird, disturbed from his dream in the night, rushes to the light that dazzles his eyes, and is caught in the toil; and I have been taught by the great teachers, through that searching conviction which cannot be resisted, that the inquisitive influence hath no good tendency when applied to matter beyond its natural bounds. But who will acknowledge that boundary? The mind of man, like the eagle, loves to spread its proud wings far

above the clouds that strive to shut heaven from its gaze. Upward in the transparent ether still it ascends,—ambition urging it on, and vanity prolonging its flight, till, long having lost sight of its earthly associations—in a new element and in a rarer atmosphere—the glories of the burning eye of the Unseen burst upon the bewildered vision, and, with scorched wings and blighted eyeballs, the soarer falls headlong through regions of darkness and dread, leaving the unspiritual portion of the man to sink, grovel, and at last amalgamate with the dust from which it rose.

Let no one despise my confession. That it may be beneficial, is the hope which leads me to make it. How many fine spirits are there, full of noble thoughts and lofty aspirations, who yearn after things beyond their reach ! Perhaps, when they become acquainted with my fearful experience, they may learn how to repress those eager impulses which keep them restless and unsatisfied. Let none treat lightly my acknowledgments of my own weakness. To lay bare one's soul and expose its guilt without shrinking, designedly for the edification of all who may be placed under similar evil influences, requires a degree of moral courage, more than the most heroic can boast ; and to tear from the heart of the world that spangled veil of hypocrisy in which all its actions are enveloped, with the hope of seeing it illumined with the everlasting sunshine of truth, which is the light of heaven, evinces a strength of purpose far above aught that the mere moralist can imagine. But it is not by the present generation that I, Vincent Herbert, expect my motives to be honoured, or even understood. The patients whose wounds are probed by the surgeon, like not their treatment, and admire not his skill. From my contemporaries I am not sanguine of receiving justice ; yet I am earnestly anxious for their favourable opinion.

Years of suffering will bow down the proudest spirit. I have become meek, humble, and devout ; and it is with a desire, sincere as ever led the spirit of the repentant to cultivate good and holy things on the soil that produced nothing but evil, that I dedicate the remaining portion of my unprofitable life, in earnest penance for the wrong I have inflicted on society, to the task of preparing and making public the strange and eventful facts which will be found related in these confessions. Moreover, let no one disbelieve ; incre-

dulity is a fool's refuge from truth. I say all that has happened to me. I will make nothing better than it appeared; and I will describe nothing worse than it existed.

I am the only existing member of an ancient and noble family which have, for many centuries, possessed extensive estates in one of the inland counties in England. I am descended from one of the bravest companions of William the Conqueror; and the Norman chief gave my ancestors the lands my family have since enjoyed, for the eminent services rendered by the sword of the brave De Herbert at the battle of Hastings. I shall not enter further into my genealogy. My forefathers want no chroniclers, and, if they did, I should make a very inefficient one. My father was shot in a duel when I was a mere child. From all I can learn, he was a man of violent passions; and the quarrel in which he perished was occasioned by his treachery to a friend, of whose wife he tried to rob him. My mother—a thousand blessings dwell upon her pure spirit!—took upon herself the care of my childhood. She was mild as an angel, always, by her sweet persuasion, winning me from my wilfulness, and with her gladdening smile teaching me the beauty of all holy things. But she died before she had found time to secure the growth of those seeds of virtue she had planted: she was too excellent for humanity; and doubtless now, from her radiant dwelling, her dove-like eyes are bending down, watching, with fond encouragement, the repentance of her guilty son. May I never again disturb the felicity of her soul!

At her decease I was committed to the guardianship of her brother, Lord Melcombe—a good-natured, obstinate, and weak man, who gave himself little trouble about me. He had been twice married; and his second wife was a vain woman of fashion, with much pride and little principle. I was sent to a public school, and, in due time, from thence to college. Care was taken that I should have an education appropriate to my expectations, but I was left to get acquainted with virtue as I best might: I need scarcely say what the consequence was,—I became early initiated into every fashionable vice. Yet these vicious propensities did not prevent me from eagerly applying to the pursuit of knowledge. I learned with extraordinary avidity; and the more information I gained, the more intense became my de-

sire for further instruction : it was an appetite that appeared as if it could not be satisfied. I should pass over this uninteresting part of my life, were it not, in my remembrance, distinguished by an incident which has had a powerful influence on my existence.

I had returned from school to the house of my guardian for the holydays, and was idling about, anxious, as most boys similarly situated are, to enter into any scheme of mischief that would give me an occupation. I mounted my pony for a race after the deer across the park, and, in leaping a low fence, I came suddenly upon a pretty little girl, who, with outstretched hands and dazzling eyes, was running after a butterfly. Before I could make an attempt to avoid the accident, the child was knocked down. I at first thought that I had killed her, and felt as much frightened as distressed. She uttered no cry and expressed no pain ; but lay mute and motionless upon the grass. Not knowing what better to do, I took her up in my arms and hastened with her to the house, intending to place the little sufferer under the care of the housekeeper, with whom I was such a favourite, that I knew, at my request, she would pay her every attention. I found the old lady in the still-room, busy upon something or other that she was making ; but, upon seeing me with my lovely burden, she exclaimed—

“Mercy on us ! what mischief have you been doing now ?”

“Dear Mrs. Cordial,” said I, coaxingly, “my pony has run against this little girl, and, I am afraid, hurt her very much. Do see what can be done for her, there’s a good creature, for she has never spoken once since she fell.”

“Spoken ! no, poor thing, and she never will again. Plague upon your pony ! what a good-for-nothing beast it must be to run against the dear little child ! But see, she is recovering !” said Mrs. Cordial, after pouring some reviving liquid down her throat. “She has only been stunned by the shock.” Then, addressing the patient, to my utter astonishment she exclaimed,—“Lady Dora, my love, take a little more of this nice stuff ; ’twill do you such a deal of good !”

The child opened its fair eyes and gazed wildly round the room, as if ignorant where she was ; then she regarded me, with a look in which fear and surprise were mingled.

"There, my dear!" continued the attentive housekeeper; "you must not be alarmed; it was only an accident. The young gentleman couldn't help it, I'm sure, and is very sorry that you have been hurt. Now, you musn't cry; 'tis very silly to cry; you should show yourself more a woman."

But the child cried; and I felt very unhappy in having been the cause of her tears. It was not like the crying of any other child. The tears trickled down her cheek silently; and an occasional sob was the only audible evidence of her grief. I began to excuse myself—hoped she was not much hurt, and was attempting an apology for my awkwardness, when I was interrupted by the old lady.

"There, there—that will do!" she exclaimed. "You need not say anything more about it. Now, go away, like a good boy, and I will carry her up to bed; perhaps you shall see her when she is better."

I was obliged to be satisfied with this promise, and left the little stranger to the care of Mrs. Cordial, strangely desirous of knowing who she could be, and anxiously wishing for her recovery. I busied myself for some hours in imagining to what family in the neighbourhood she belonged; but, after having fruitlessly attempted to ascertain her relationship, I felt convinced that she had recently arrived here, and had come on a visit to the housekeeper. The title by which she had been addressed, I considered as merely used to gratify the child. To her, therefore, I proceeded, fully intent upon gaining the desired information. My astonishment may be imagined when I was informed that the sweet little girl was the only daughter of my guardian, by his first wife. Her mother-in-law took no notice of her; in fact, it was evident, she disliked the child. The consequence was, that the little Dora was sadly neglected, never allowed to see her father, or to mingle with the family; was shut up in the nursery, and, only through the kindness of the housekeeper, ever breathed the open air. Mrs. Cordial alone paid her much attention, for the rest of the servants, fearing to lose their places if they offended their mistress, never exhibited much interest for her pitiful situation. The former, however, had been a friend to the little girl, had taught her to read, and was endeavouring to instil into her infant mind a knowledge of good and evil; but the good woman

had a powerful obstacle to contend against, which I did not discover till afterward.

I was, of course, much shocked at this explanation, and disliked Lady Honoria more than ever; indeed, I threatened to express my indignation to Lord Melcombe; but my good friend declared, that if I at any time confessed my knowledge of her *protégé's* existence to either her lord or lady, I should never be allowed to see her again. I promised silence.

This discovery had a most important influence upon me at that period. My sympathies were strongly awakened for my fair relative; and as Lord Melcombe and Lady Honoria were in town, I had sufficient opportunities of encouraging their development. But, for some days, I was allowed to have very little communication with Dora. I saw her only for a few minutes at a time. The housekeeper always prevented me from staying longer with her young charge than was necessary to express my hopes of her improvement, saying, the shock had been so violent to the child's delicate frame, that my appearance in the room made her worse. I could scarcely believe this, because Dora's looks were full of kindness and gentleness: still there was one thing which I thought inexplicable in her conduct—she never spoke to me. Since I had first seen her, I had never heard her utter a word. This gave me considerable uneasiness. I fancied that the pain I had caused, had created a feeling of dread and dislike, of which I was the object; and that our mutual friend prevented us from being long in each other's company, that this feeling should not increase. How I blamed myself for my carelessness! I endeavoured to erase the unfavourable impression I thought I had made, by the utmost kindness and attention. I brought my interesting cousin everything which I imagined might please her. I gathered for her the rarest flowers, and plucked the choicest fruits. Every picture, every toy I possessed I brought for her amusement; and in directing her attention to their peculiar uses or attractions, I said everything which I thought might produce a change in her sentiments towards me. But still she spoke not. The fair child, when I entered the room in which she lay, appeared to regard me with pleasure; but when I sat by her side and began to talk to her, a shadow of deep melancholy stole over her gentle

features ; she ceased to smile, and not a word escaped from her lips. This to me appeared dreadful. I could not account for it,—could not change it. The more affectionate my language became, the more painful became the expression of her countenance. I tried all things, and failed in all ; and, after vainly endeavouring to change her manner towards me, I would seek some solitary spot and bemoan my unhappy destiny.

It is a mistaken notion that the feelings of children are not as acute as those of adults. In many instances they are more so ; a child of much sensibility suffers more than a man, because the latter, from intercourse with the world, from the influence of religion or philosophy, is rendered less sensitive or better able to keep his feelings under proper control ; but the child, in the naked innocence of nature, influenced only by its sympathies and impulses, and ignorant of the world and of its learning, receives impressions of pain or pleasure so readily, that time frequently finds it difficult to erase them. The pleasures of childhood are rapturous enjoyments—ecstasies—felicities : heaven appears to shine upon its joys with a most radiant light. Kindness, gentleness, and love, are the ingredients of the atmosphere it breathes. Its griefs are sorrowful pains—miseries—agonies ; the shadows of despair appear to shroud them in impenetrable darkness ; unkindness, disappointment, and regret, create the wretchedness of its existence. The child is influenced by the philosophy of the heart, not of the mind ; and the former encourages the growth of those feelings, which, until worldly knowledge, with all its selfishness, has taken possession of his nature, occasion his peculiar sensibility.

I remember the misery I felt when I fancied my little cousin would not speak to me ; all the sports in which I used to find such delight, now seemed deprived of their attractions. I walked about alone, without an object and without a desire, well convinced that I was the most unhappy child that had ever been born. I thought I would ascertain if her silence proceeded from resentment ; and one day, during the absence of the housekeeper, as Dora was reclining on a sofa, I proceeded to tell her how deeply I regretted the pain I had occasioned—how gladly I would endure all her sufferings if it would lead to her recovery ;

and assured her how very miserable I had been because I fancied that she looked upon me with dislike. I observed, as I proceeded, her colour change and her look become confused. With that eloquence which is the natural gift of childhood, I continued speaking, declaring that in me she should always find a protector, a friend, a brother.

"But, dearest cousin," I exclaimed, taking her hand in my own, and regarding her with all a brother's affection, "why do you not speak to me? Am I become so hateful to you that you will not allow me a word of kindness? Say that you forgive my carelessness, and you will make me the happiest boy in the world."

I watched the effect of this appeal; but few can judge of my surprise,—my anguish,—when, with a look, the expression of which I should not forget were I to live to an eternity, she threw her arms round my neck and wept upon my bosom. She spoke not a word; the hot tears that she let fall upon my cheek, and the convulsive sobs that burst from her overcharged heart, expressed all. A light broke in upon me; the fearful truth at last flashed upon my bewildered senses,—she was dumb!

I afterward learned that from an illness which occurred only a few years preceding, she had been deprived of the use of speech; and that her mother-in-law, instead of finding in that dreadful affliction a fresh claim upon her sympathies, treated the poor child with greater neglect. "It was absurd," she said, "to attempt to educate one to whom accomplishments could be of no service;" and, as she had herself become a mother, she thought she had enough to do to take care of her own child. As she seldom visited Melcombe House, and as her lord devoted nearly all his time to politics, he having recently accepted an appointment conferred upon him by the existing ministry, Dora was scarcely ever thought of by either. The desolate situation of my young relative filled me with pity. I thought of nothing else. I was her senior by three or four years, and I determined to act as if I were her elder brother. I first endeavoured to seek some means to alleviate the affliction under which she suffered; and, after much application, I invented a system of signs by which she might at all times express her wishes. Observing how grossly her education had been neglected, and knowing that with the exception of

the holydays I should never be allowed to see her, I consulted Mrs. Cordial about the necessity of finding a governess for her ; but she was not acquainted with any person possessed of the requisite ability.

There was another whose kindness towards me at that time and on more important occasions I can never forget. Mark Thoroughgood was one of those rare philanthropists occasionally sent upon the earth for the happiness of mankind. He was the curate of Herbert. His small income was at the command of those who needed it more than himself. How he managed to exist with so many calls upon his bounty, none could say ; yet he was always of a cheerful heart, and was ever grateful to Heaven for having allowed him the power of being of some service to his fellow-creatures. His generous disposition knew no bounds : his heart was as pure as his mind was liberal ; and his taste, though cultivated by education, readily adapted itself to the wants and pleasures of the poor and ignorant around him. With him I had from my infancy become acquainted : I frequently studied, walked, and conversed with him ; and to him I went for advice when I discovered the friendless situation of my cousin. Nothing seemed to give that good man so much gratification as the prospect of assisting in any scheme for the increase of human happiness ; and the assistance he gave me was most valuable and most encouraging. He was pleased with the interest I took in the subject. Ah ! how much happier might I have been had I remembered his excellent counsels !

By his direction, the widow of his predecessor, a very intelligent woman, was engaged as Dora's instructress, and Mrs. Thrift entered into my plans with all the enthusiasm of a benevolent heart. Being liberally provided with pocket-money, I was enabled to pay every expense which was necessarily incurred by this scheme ; and watching its beneficial effects was for several years the greatest pleasure I could enjoy. Often during the vacation, hour after hour passed by in rapid progress, as I sat by the side of my grateful pupil on the lawn before the house, explaining to her the application of such knowledge as I possessed, while her mild and gentle eyes were turned upon me with looks of admiration and intelligence.

It was about this time I formed an acquaintance with

Stillborn, or, as his companions called him, Stillborn the Fatalist. I met him first at Oxford: he was a pale, thoughtful, melancholy student, and there was a mysteriousness about him that attracted and interested me. We soon became friends: I found him a mild, quiet youth, upon most occasions,—very reserved concerning all that related to himself, yet continually expressing the most speculative opinions regarding religion. He acknowledged himself the victim of necessity. He confessed that he had no will of his own. All his actions, he said, were the result of circumstances. It was a part of his doctrine that man is a mere machine in the hands of fate; and that being impelled by an influence he cannot control, he is not accountable to any superior being for whatever evil he may be forced to commit. He produced his philosophy in so persuasive a manner, and strengthened his arguments by so many convincing proofs, that his conversation possessed a sort of charm to which I was never tired of listening; and a few weeks of his society were sufficient to unsettle the faith that my mother's fondness and Mr. Thoroughgood's friendship had inculcated. He possessed talents of a high order, and was remarkably studious. He seldom mingled in the extravagances which distinguished myself and the greater portion of the students; but when he did join our revelries he was far the maddest of us all: there was nothing that he would not do. Upon one occasion he made himself so conspicuous by the atrocities he committed, that he attracted the attention of the authorities and was expelled the university. I was much vexed at the severity of his sentence, because I fancied that I was equally to blame in the share I had taken in the transaction. I parted with him with great regret. On his friendship I placed a high value; and when he told me that by the desire of his guardian he was going to conclude his studies in the university of Gottingen, I promised to use every exertion in the endeavour to join him there.

During the last vacation passed at Melcombe House, I walked one afternoon to Herbert, for the purpose of seeing my excellent friend, the Rev. Mark Thoroughgood. It was some time before I could find him; but at last I discovered the reverend gentleman, with quite as much zeal as he ever evinced in the pulpit, heading a party of noisy cricket

players on the common. This did not surprise me, because I knew it was his custom to encourage his parishioners in all their innocent pastimes. He often said that more good could be done by attending to the pleasures of the people, than by the best sermon that could be preached. As soon as I was recognised, he welcomed me with all the glee of a schoolboy; the game was immediately concluded, and another commenced, in which I was chosen to lead the party to which he was opposed. I cannot describe the gratification I felt at observing the behaviour of the young men to their pastor. They were ever respectful, joyful, and well-behaved. There was no swearing—no quarrelling—no ill names; the contest was carried on with the utmost spirit, and in the most perfect good-humour. When the curate made a good hit, everybody raised a shout of gratification; and while he was running, all united in encouraging his exertions. I never enjoyed any game with so much pleasure. Although at school I had been considered a first-rate player, I found in Mark Thoroughgood an opponent it was not easy to excel. His party had the first innings: most of his associates I bowled out after very few runs; others were better skilled in the game; but when he took the bat in hand, he so well guarded his wicket that all my art became unavailing. Ball after ball was sent flying through the air with a force no one could stop, and he kept adding to his score amid the shouts of the field, till I thought there would be no end to the game. At last, in attempting a longer run than was requisite, the ball was delivered to me in less time than he had calculated upon, and I knocked out one of his stumps before he could ground his bat.

It was now our turn. He began to bowl, and in a short time several of my party were bowled out, to the great delight of their companions; but their reverend opponent had always something consolatory or complimentary to say to the defeated cricketers, and the disappointed bumpkin only scratched his head, and endeavoured to look pleased. I watched the game with more interest than I had felt on any previous occasion. It was evidently going against me; and, although the curate encouraged the players to do their best, it was the general opinion that I should be easily beaten. My turn came as the last player, with an amazing long score before me, and with no hope except a reliance on my own

skill, and on that of my companion. I took the bat with a feeling of nervousness which threatened to put a speedy conclusion to the contest. To my great gratification I discovered that my companion was an excellent player. We began cautiously and well; striking every ball, and making secure runs. The good curate seemed as much pleased with our skill as if we had belonged to his party; and every time we added to our score, he applauded as vehemently as the most enthusiastic of my companions. We were gaining ground. Every person in the field watched the issue of the contest with greater earnestness. All became gradually more silent as every ball was bowled towards the wicket, and each player seemed to take his breath with greater ease; when he saw the ball sent back bounding along the ground, his anxiety was most distressing. My companion seemed scarcely less interested in the game, and we both appeared so exhausted by the great exertions we had made, that I felt convinced, although I had now some prospect of success, that want of sufficient strength to continue our exertions would be the cause of our defeat. I made a desperate effort. I struck with all my force, and ran with all my speed. We were close upon our adversaries. When we were within three of my opponent's innings, I became so giddy that I missed a ball that was bowled towards me, and down came my wicket.

Mr. Thoroughgood soon erased the unpleasant feelings that my companion and myself experienced, by praising our superior skill. He acknowledged that he had never seen a game played so well. When we were returning home together, he said—

“You can form no idea, my dear Vincent, of the excellent effect which proceeds from my associating continually with my parishioners. All those young men are honest, sober, and industrious, and attend church with greater sincerity, and with more punctuality, than people who consider themselves more religious. The fact is, they are well aware that I would not associate with them on so friendly a footing if their characters were disreputable; consequently, they take a pride in endeavouring to make themselves worthy of becoming my companions. I share in all their amusements that are healthy and innocent; and I have found by

so doing, that I have increased their moral happiness, and added to their physical enjoyments."

I was delighted to observe the improvement which every half-year became visible in Dora's person and intellect; and grew so proud of my scholar, and so charmed by her appearance, that I was never so happy as when forwarding her studies. While in her society, I forsook all those occupations that form the chief delight of a young man of fortune, and devoted myself entirely to her service. Then I had not a desire which might not have been breathed in her presence; for having become her instructor, I watched my own actions with jealous care while in her neighbourhood, that I might do nothing which would destroy her confidence in my integrity, or make me unworthy of the office I had assumed. But when beyond the charm of her presence, the influence of bad example, and the possession of the means of indulgence, led me into every excess. I became dissolute and depraved. When I returned to her she welcomed me with the smile of an angel. She thought me pure and excellent, worthy of her respect, her esteem, her admiration; and, evil as I had been, I had enough good within me never, by word or action, to lead her to suspect the follies and crimes of which I had been guilty. In this manner the fair child grew into an elegant girl, and the girl was gradually acquiring the charms of womanhood; while I, tired of the monotony of Oxford, and much charmed with the character of the German philosophy, determined to finish my education at the university where my friend Stillborn was residing. Having gained my uncle's permission, with many promises of writing frequently, I left my sorrowing pupil, and started for Gottingen.

CHAPTER II.

I become thoroughly acquainted with the philosophy of the Fatalist.—The grave-digger of Gottingen, and the suicide's funeral.—The Fatalist relates to me the strange incidents of his life, in which the ill effects of early indulgence are developed.

STILLBORN and I for many months were continually together. He introduced me to his fellow-students—he explored with me the neighbourhood of Gottingen, and in his society I continued my studies ; but to everything that we saw, heard, or read he directed my particular attention, as containing evidence of the truth of his peculiar doctrines. He insisted that nothing occurred that was not the result of *necessity*, and by his reference to matters passing around us, he convinced me that such a thing as *free will* was impossible.

One moonlight evening we strolled out by the Albaner Gate, towards the adjoining burial-place, Stillborn conversing as usual on his philosophical principles. He was in one of his most melancholy moods, complaining of the lamentable condition of man.

"Let us, in the first place, consider his physical constitution," observed the Fatalist. "There is no animal that passes so great a portion of its life in such comparative helplessness as man. The generality of animals soon acquire their full powers, are subject to few diseases, and seldom exist beyond the extinction of their energies : but man passes an age of helpless infancy, is the prey of a thousand disorders, and lingers out the long evening of his life in imbecile senility. On other creatures nature has bestowed a covering suitable to the climate in which they dwell ; man, in every part of the globe, has nothing to defend him from the weather, except what art has supplied, and custom made universal. The beasts of the forests, the birds of the air, and even the smallest insects, are provided with natural weapons, by means of which they seize their food, form themselves habitations, or defend themselves when attacked :

but man, the lord of all, in a state of nature, is absolutely defenceless: he cannot for his subsistence destroy any but the smallest and most inoffensive creatures; he cannot work without tools; and he becomes an easy prey to any beast sufficiently courageous to attack him. He has neither the speed, the muscular energy, nor the fitness to endure hunger and thirst, and heat and cold, as have those living things which reason tells him were created to be subservient to his wants, and to increase his enjoyments. In this state how does he live? He drags out a miserable existence by feeding on such productions of the earth as are discovered to be palatable, and on such animals as are the most securely destroyed. By superior cunning he tries to evade his innumerable enemies; and necessity teaches him the use of such artificial weapons as are most readily made, and are most destructive in their application. What is his fate? His life is one of continual fear and famine. He is always in danger, ever in want; and his weapons once failing in his attack upon some savage adversary, a few minutes and his bones are left to bleach in the forest."

"But civilization has rendered such a state of existence almost impossible," I remarked.

"Civilization has invented fire-arms, and taught the necessity of combination for the destruction of the more powerful beasts," replied my companion: "but I am talking of the natural unfitness of man for his supremacy in creation. Take man, divested of artificial weapons, and place him in opposition to any of the superior animals, and what would be the result?"

"Then you would have the superiority of man to consist in mere brute strength!" said I.

"Mere brute strength!" he exclaimed. "What constituted the superiority of the great heroes of antiquity,—and, I may say, the most heroic men of all times? Discover it—scrutinize it—analyze it:—it's mere brute strength! What made those great men great? Take them all, from Hercules—or, if you place no credit in his fame, from Samson, whose feats are equally incredible—down to Shaw, the Life-guardsmen:—'tis nothing but mere brute strength. Well, having considered man in his physical condition, let us inquire into his moral state. First of all, it is easily proved that he is not a free agent; his own reason tells him that

certain actions are destructive of his own happiness, and injurious to the welfare of the community ; yet he commits those actions, and the world calls them crimes : he feels that there is an overpowering necessity at work that impels him to act ; he acts accordingly, and that act is either criminal in itself, or leads to crime. Nothing he does proceeds from his will : all his actions are the result of necessity. I will prove this :—a rich man travels along a road,—behind him is a poor man ; the poor man thinks that, if he had the rich man's wealth he should be free from hunger and poverty. He cannot resist such thoughts : he sees the rich man in a lonely place, secure from every kind of observation, and he feels convinced that he could easily deprive him of his wealth : he cannot help feeling that conviction. The poor man robs the rich man : he is obliged to do so. The poor man then thinks that he should be more secure from punishment if the rich man was dead ; or, the rich man struggles to preserve his property, and the poor man, to obtain it, makes use of violence. The poor man murders the rich man, and buries the body in the earth. Necessity compelled the poor man to become a murderer, and necessity compelled the rich man to be murdered. But trace any cause up to its effect, and the result will be the same. Fate is omnipotent, and inclination is its slave."

"If man is not a free agent, he cannot be answerable for the evil he commits," I observed.

"Just so," said the Fatalist.

"Then how do you account for the general belief in a future state?" I inquired.

"The natural selfishness of human nature, arising from its dependent state, is the cause of this belief," he replied. "You will find that children are governed by a system of rewards and punishments : mankind are also tempted to be good that they may enjoy their sugar-plums ; and threatened with all the horrors of old Bogy if they attempt to do evil."

"But man has a soul !" I exclaimed.

"It is the general opinion," remarked my companion, doubtfully.

"Then what becomes of the soul after death?" I asked.

"Various philosophers have given it various destinations," said he. "Perhaps they are all entitled to consideration ;

perhaps none. I confess myself most pleased with the much-abused doctrine of Pythagoras."

"What! do you believe in the metempsychosis?" said I, much surprised at such a confession from the lips of so shrewd a thinker as Stillborn.

"I did not say I believed in it: I only said it pleased me," he replied. "And why should it not? It is ingenious and poetical, and has outlasted many of the systems of philosophy it preceded. It is still honoured in the East. How can we account for the intelligence so frequently observed in numerous individuals of the animal world, unless we imagine them possessed of nobler spirits than properly belong to their natures? What produces the sagacity of the elephant, the faithfulness of the dog, the bravery of the lion, the ingenuity of birds, the industry of insects? Instinct! exclaims the modern philosopher; the transmigration of souls! said Pythagoras. What is instinct, if instinct is capable of producing such effects? and why is it not just as likely that the elephant possesses the spirit of a philosopher—the dog that of a kind friend—the lion that of a hero—that the swallow evinces the genius of a clever artisan—and the bee that of a hard-working mechanic—as that these particular qualities should be the development of instinct? Instinct is incomprehensible; for none of the many writers of natural history have given an intelligible or satisfactory account of its nature; but the metempsychosis every one can understand. So much for Pythagoras."

"What is your opinion of the different systems of philosophy known to the ancients?" I asked.

"They are all more or less open to objection," he replied. "The philosophy of the Epicureans was too selfish; that of the Stoics too unnatural; and that of the Cynics too unsocial. Anaxagoras has left us some noble truths, which bigotry and ignorance vainly endeavour to destroy. He was the greatest of the Ionian school."

"Am I to imagine, from your praise of that philosopher, that you advocate his philosophy?" said I.

"And why not?" he replied, calmly. "The opinions that were attentively listened to by Socrates, Euripides, Pericles, and Archelaus, and afterward adopted by Leucippus, Democritus, Epicurus, and a whole host of illustrious followers, ought to attract the attention of an obscure student, anxiously

searching for the truth. The man who taught Socrates is well qualified to instruct me. But what is there in the atomic theory so very objectionable? If matter and space exist, they exist in the state of separation and combination imagined by the old philosophers—the former in its infinite atoms, spreading itself with various motions and in different forms; the latter, as the pores of all solids, formed by a combination of matter and space; and both, separate or together, exist as portions of the whole universe. It is also natural to suppose that the same power that called forth these components from their elementary state, can replace them as infinite void and infinite atoms of the chaos from whence they arose, and thus destroy the world it has created. That the world will be destroyed, appears the belief of all those persons who call themselves Christians; that it will be recreated, ought to be the conviction of every man who wishes to be styled a philosopher.”

“This system has some relation to the materialism of Leibnitz and of his followers,” I remarked.

“It is the origin of materialism,” said he: “Leibnitz considered that each atom possesses a certain principle, which creates the sympathies, the affinities, the combinations, and the forms of bodies. Dutrochet, Prevost, Dumas, and others, by the assistance of the microscope, discovered that all animal and vegetable matter is composed of myriads of atoms, each independently possessing the vital principle.”

“These discoveries are very extraordinary, and quite in opposition to the general conception of such things,” I observed, as we entered the burial-ground; “I will, nevertheless, give them due consideration. In these systems of the world there always appears to me so much of the startling and incredible, and so little in alliance with preconceived notions, that the mind hesitates to receive them. May I ask what system of morals you would advocate for the purpose of governing human nature?”

“What is the use of rules of morality to him who is condemned to do evil?” bitterly inquired the Fatalist. “Necessity sets systems at defiance: fate overthrows all laws.”

We were approaching a new-made grave, in which a short fat man, with inflamed eyes, a grisly head, and a wrinkled face, somewhat satirical in its expression, with a red waistcoat thrown open, and his shirt sleeves tucked above his

elbows, was busily at work : he appeared as if he had not noticed our approach ; for, while he proceeded with his labour, he continued to sing, in a shrill cracked pipe, some such words as the following :—

THE GRAVE-DIGGER'S SONG.

“The shipwright he builds him a house on the sea—
Merrily ply the mattock and spade !—
Where the waves mount the skies, and the winds, in their glee,
Are driving a desperate trade :
But down goes the ship, like a huge lump of lead ;
And the sexton laughs loud, as he earneth his bread—
‘He builds for the *living* and I for the *DEAD*—
Merrily ply the mattock and spade !’

The mason he builds up the high castle wall—
Merrily ply the mattock and spade !—
In a way that was never intended to fall,
Though ages their seal on it laid :
But time passes by, and the castle hath fled—
‘Oh, oh !’ cries the sexton, and shakes his old head ;
‘He builds for the *living* and I for the *DEAD*—
Merrily ply the mattock and spade !’

The sexton he builds a house snug and genteel—
Merrily ply the mattock and spade !—
And bids the worm wait, and he’ll give him a meal
Far better than alderman made.
The shipwright and mason to that house are led,
And find a safe home and an excellent bed :
They build for the *living* and he for the *DEAD*—
Merrily ply the mattock and spade !

The shipwright and mason build handsome and strong—
Merrily ply the mattock and spade !—
Yet still they leave always a something that’s wrong,
Displeasing to master or maid :
The fame of the sexton through all lands hath spread ;
His tenants complain not—they’re much too well bred :—
All build for the *living*, but he for the *DEAD*—
Merrily ply the mattock and spade !”

“This rogue seems pleased with his vocation,” said I, as I leaned against a tombstone, and watched the proceedings of the old sexton ; “yet ’tis a disagreeable office.” This rude shovelling of the relics of mortality gives me a painful sense of inferiority. I would sooner be left to the art of the

embalmer, or burnt, and have my 'ashes placed in the sepulchral urn, than allow my mouldering bones to be knocked about by every clown who handles a mattock."

"The grave-digger follows his destiny," replied the Fatalist. "Fate hath made him what he is, and he cannot be otherwise. If there existed no necessity, all those callings which are disgusting would be universally neglected for occupations the most pleasing. Habit has made him look upon his trade with the same satisfaction we feel in our studies. As for what becomes of the body after death, it is an inquiry that must end in dissatisfaction when we are told the humiliating truth, that 'of dust we were made, and to dust we must return.' What matters it, then, how the senseless clod is treated? The mummy of the proud Egyptian, after three thousand years of preservation, becomes, at last, the fuel of the Arab. The ashes of the noble Roman have been scattered to the winds, and the urn that contained them forms part of a modern exhibition. It is of little consequence, then, if we die and are buried, or die and are embalmed or burnt. It is sufficient to know that we die and are useless."

The old man had for some minutes been silently turning up the earth, but now he again commenced :—

"The sexton he works for the rich and the poor—

Merrily ply the mattock and spade !—

His houses contain neither window nor door ;

His customers seek not their aid.

On the great and the proud he can fearlessly tread,

When the shipwright and mason are trembling with dread :

They build for the *living*, and he for the *DEAD*—

Merrily ply the mattock and spade !"

"Thou seemest pleased with thy employment, friend !" exclaimed Stillborn, as he stood by the side of the grave.

"And why not, master ?" asked the man, resting on his spade, and looking up to the Fatalist from the hollow bed he had made in the earth.

"Because 'tis a trade that all men despise," replied my companion.

"So much the better for those who live by it," said the grave-digger, with a sharp, satirical sort of laugh. "But the employment is more noble than is generally supposed.

Here am I, a wiser man than all the great philosophers and promising students that are sleeping quietly around me. Philosophers, forsooth! They are all fools: 'tis I who possess superior wisdom!"

"Why so, friend?" inquired Stillborn.

"Because they haven't the sense to *live*, and I have," replied the old man, with a shrill chuckle of satisfaction. "Ugh!" he exclaimed, as he struck with his spade a skull he that moment threw up with some soil; "here's a pretty fool!—a delicate fool; as arrant an ass as any in Gottingen; and there are a few there. I buried him forty years ago come next winter, and his fame was greater than that of any wise man in Christendom. What a fool he looks like now! Would he, if he were not the fool he is, take so quietly that thump of the head I have given him? He hasn't the wit to complain. There's not a fool living in all Germany who doth not possess more sense than fifty dead philosophers!"

"Ay!" said my companion, taking up the skull, and bringing it close to me for my inspection, "this is the end of all philosophy. This skull once possessed a brain, and that brain produced thoughts that have been the admiration of the civilized world. But now what is it? A thing loathsome to the touch, disgusting to the sight, and unprofitable for any purpose: in the eyes of the moralist, a memento of man's mortality: it is the gibe of the humorist, and the fear of the superstitious. Science, learning, wisdom, and genius meet no better fate than this! Alas for humanity, that all its great purposes should end in so deplorable a little-ness!"

The Fatalist flung away the philosopher's skull, like one who is glad to get rid of an object that lessens him in his own estimation; and I felt a strange dissatisfaction with my condition I had never experienced before. I seemed humiliated and degraded. A feeling of hopelessness had taken possession of my nature. I became sensible of a want of confidence in the value of my own objects, and an incredulousness in the existence of a superior being. From these unnatural and unsatisfactory reflections I was roused by the appearance of a funeral procession approaching the burial-ground.

"Here comes another fool!" exclaimed the grave-digger, rubbing his hands with glee; "and a precious fool he was!"

"Why, what folly has *he* committed to distinguish him from his predecessors?" I inquired.

"This much, master," replied the old man, while a grim appeared on his shrivelled features—"other fools have died in a respectable manner, by the hands of their apothecaries; they had the sense to live as long as they could; but the fool who comes to tenant this grave, died by his own hands: he hurried out of the world before he had tasted the pleasures it contains. A precious fool!"

"'Tis true," said Stillborn, with that melancholy emphasis which generally marked his conversation; "the body now borne this way is that of a young and amiable student, whose virtues and talents have been the admiration of all persons to whom he was known. In the fresh glow of youth, surrounded by every inducement to live, he became disgusted with life, and put a termination to his existence. Fate made him a suicide, and he has fulfilled his destiny!"

I regarded the funeral procession with a sad and painful interest. My sympathies had been deeply excited. I felt as if I could have wept with the mourners, when I saw the callous sexton shovelling the earth upon the coffin of the unhappy suicide. He had been much loved by his associates, and his fellow-students attended his funeral in a numerous body—silent, sorrowful, and dismayed. They were grouped around the grave in small parties, as the last melancholy offices were bestowed on their deceased friend—all bare-headed—many with weeping eyes, and few without aching hearts.

I left the burial-ground with Stillborn, and we continued our walk and our conversation; but the unhappy sensations I had endured did not leave me. Returning into the town, great was my surprise at beholding the students I had seen, a few hours since, so overcome with grief, associated with nearly a thousand others in the market-place, singing a bacchanalian chorus, with all the strength of their lungs!

"This is human nature!" exclaimed the Fatalist: "the dead friend is soon forgotten when the living are surrounded by a crowd of joyous companions."

I entered Stillborn's lodging—a gloomy chamber in the dullest part of the town. The furniture was old, heavy, and

sombre : even the books, in their dark bindings, had an air of mystery that associated them with their owner. I sat down to rest myself.

"It is time," said my friend, drawing his chair nearer to mine, "that you should know more of me than you do. I am naturally reserved in matters relative to my personal history, although my opinions I never attempt to conceal ; but the secrets of my own life are such, as, if told to the common herd, would gain me nothing but persecution. Few will allow themselves to be convinced that a man's actions do not originate in his will. You, my friend, I have reason to believe, feel such a conviction ; therefore, when I relate crimes that I have done, or caused to be done, I hope you will not see in me a criminal worthy of punishment, but, rather, a victim deserving your pity."

I listened with extraordinary attention to the promised communication.

"I know nothing of my father," continued the Fatalist : "he died before I was born. I was left entirely to the care of a fond, indulgent, indolent mother, who, because I was her only child, and heir to the family property, petted, spoiled, and neglected me. My evil propensities were left unchecked—my follies were openly encouraged. But it is worse than useless to reproach her for the conduct she pursued towards me—she only fulfilled her destiny, and I was left to pursue mine. In my nature, thus early, was formed a hotbed for the culture of all baneful passions. During my boyhood, when headstrong, ungovernable, and ignorant, my mother added to her establishment a young girl, the illegitimate daughter of an Italian woman. She entered our house as an object of charity, and she was engaged to be my attendant ; that is, to become the uncomplaining victim of all my whims. I was a tyrant—a selfish, proud, and pampered tyrant ; but Maria possessed a thousand fascinations—was lovely, kind, gentle, and amiable ; and, in a few days, I felt more gratification in being persuaded by her, than in requiring her to perform my wishes. Imperceptibly her influence advanced. At her desire I allowed the services of a tutor, and, with her assistance, I soon made rapid progress in my studies. I became less violent ; I grew more rational. My mother, observing with pleasure the improvement taking place in my disposition, treated the au-

thor of it with increased kindness ; and the poor girl, who had experienced little of such generous behaviour, looked upon me as its origin, and made greater exertions to procure my happiness.

“ Years passed by, and I became a youth of better feelings than I had known in my boyhood ; yet headstrong upon occasions, and independent of all control save that of my fair companion. Maria increased in loveliness and excellence. She was my senior by two or three years. Her form swelled like the bud of some glowing flower, and blossomed into the full maturity of womanly beauty. She looked as if the Promethean fire of some mighty passion had been breathed into her nature : every glance, every gesture, spoke a new influence. Her cheeks were died with a warmer bloom ; her lips were bathed with a more delicious fragrance ; and her eyes were suffused with a more delightful humidity than they had hitherto possessed. Her heart had become freighted with a store of sweet affections, that seemed offered to the first adventurer that sought the prize. Then I experienced a change—a gradual and important change. I became restless and uneasy when Maria was away from me ; I trembled when she touched me ; and when, in all the innocence of her guileless nature, her warm lips rested on my own, my cheeks were flushed with a burning heat, and a sudden sense of faintness seemed ready to take from me all consciousness of existence. What these emotions were I knew not ; but they increased in power, and the excitement they produced occasioned a dangerous fever.

“ During my illness Maria was constantly at my bedside. She was unremitting in her attentions ; and, more from her care than through the skill of the physician, I recovered. We were continually left together ; for my mother, satisfied that I had profited by Maria’s society, gave herself no further concern upon the subject. She never dreamed of evil. Foolish woman ! While the moral happiness of her son was trembling upon a precipice, she was sleeping in security. But why should I blame her ! Her indolence was the mere effect of necessity, and the crimes which it produced were directed by fate. It would be a useless labour to attempt to portray the ineffectual exertions which two young and innocent beings made to struggle with their evil destinies. The result was natural. A different arrange-

ment of circumstances could not have occurred. Thus was laid the foundation stone of a fabric of human misery and crime !

“My mother was suffering from severe indisposition. She had been obliged for some time to confine herself to her bedroom ; consequently possessed few opportunities of observing the destructive intimacy springing up so near her. I had long been left completely my own master. I now made my independence assist my inclinations. Maria often appeared very unhappy : I soon found out the cause, and learned the necessity of immediate concealment. I wrote a letter in a disguised hand, that appeared to have been sent by a friend of Maria’s mother, residing in London, to the purport that, if Maria wished to see her parent, she must use the utmost despatch, as the latter was in the last agonies of death. This note I carried to my mother, and found no difficulty in persuading her to allow me to accompany Maria in her journey. I procured a lodging for her in a retired part of the town, and the people of the house being well paid, were not inquisitive. Here I gave myself up to the full indulgence of my fatal passion, and week after week passed by, finding me still the slave of enervating and unprofitable pleasures. I loved Maria with a maddening earnestness, and she returned my passion with all the ardour of her fond and generous nature. Both experienced the frequent conviction that we were doing evil, and both felt occasional regrets for its consequences : but what can individual reflection or feeling do against fate !

“My stay in London greatly alarmed my mother, and heightened her disease ; and some one having informed her of the true cause of my absence, the dreadful intelligence came upon her enfeebled frame with so sudden and unexpected a shock, that it was thought she would not survive the day. A despatch was immediately sent off for me, urging my instant return home. I left Maria in tears, and returned to my mother’s house with the utmost speed. Alas ! it was too late. She had died a few hours before I arrived ; and, by my own heart, as well as by the opinion of her attendants, I was convicted of having been her destroyer. The feelings of remorse with which I regarded the dead body of my mother, were overpowering. I became frantic with grief. My violence was not to be controlled, and the

powerful workings of my evil nature produced a dangerous attack of inflammation of the brain. My illness was protracted, and continued the longer from the anxiety I felt to learn what had become of Maria. I felt a restless uneasiness to know how she had borne my absence, and imagination called up a thousand horrors. I had no means of ascertaining her situation until I felt sufficiently recovered to undertake a journey to town. My desire to get well continually increased my indisposition; and then my emotions were harrowing when I thought of the share I had had in occasioning my mother's death. The curse of the parricide seemed upon me. I had frequent relapses. I was continually hovering upon the verge of the grave. But my destiny had not been accomplished.

"When I became convalescent, I found that, by my mother's will, I was left to the care of a guardian, during my minority. Without informing any one of my proceedings, I hastened towards London. When I arrived there, I traversed the streets with rapid steps till I came to Maria's lodging. The street door was partly open. I entered the house without knocking, and went directly to her room. As I opened the door I beheld her in tears, sitting by the side of a table on which lay something covered over with a white cloth. She did not appear to observe my entrance. Her eyes were fixed upon the table with an intense expression of sadness; but what was the object of their contemplation I could not imagine. I went up to her, and caressed her with my usual fondness. She started from my embrace; then, casting on me a look of reproach, she drew aside the cloth from the table, and, covering her face with her hands, sank back sobbing upon her seat. A sight met my gaze, which to the day of doom will never be effaced from my memory: it was the body of an infant, dead and stiff, lying shrouded in a small coffin. I experienced a sense of suffocation—I gasped for breath—the air felt scorching hot—all consciousness of existence seemed rapidly departing from me—and I could see nothing but the placid features of the dead child, and its dull eyes fixed upon mine with a look that seemed to point me out as its murderer. Fate had given me another victim. I shuddered and drew back from the appalling spectacle, and tried to shut it out from my sight. There I stood, trembling like a condemned crimi-

nal, afraid to speak, and unable to move, till Maria approached me.

“‘It is dead!’ said she, in a solemn whisper, that sunk into my heart like a lacerating weapon.

“‘Dead!’ I exclaimed, in an agony I felt insupportable.

“‘Dead!’ she replied; and the tears chased each other upon her cheek. ‘But look upon its mild eyes and gentle countenance!’ she continued, as well as her sobs would enable her to proceed. ‘It seems so beautiful and so happy in its death!’

“I took my hands from before my eyes, and, oh! the horror I endured when I beheld the fearful object in her arms so close to me, that it almost touched my person! This was more than human nature could bear. Trying to avert my eyes, I staggered back a few paces with an involuntary shriek of terror, and then fled from the spot as if the angel of death was on my footsteps. I cannot describe to you my sensations at that dreadful moment. They were beyond the power of language to delineate. If the years I have lived could be restored to me, I would reject the boon, if obliged to endure again the agonies of those few minutes. When I found myself in the street, I grew better—the cool air revived me—and I began to breathe without pain or oppression. I had, however, gone but a very short distance, and was considering what was necessary to be done in Maria’s present situation, when I was seized by two men, who, immediately my absence was discovered, had been sent in pursuit of me by my guardian; and, in spite of my struggles and entreaties, was forced into a post-chaise and hurried home.

“When I was ushered into the presence of my guardian, I had formed no conception that there would be any control over my actions; and when he began to reprimand me severely for what he called my unwarrantable conduct, I answered contemptuously, denying his authority, and declaring that I intended to do as I pleased. He soon made me aware of my weakness and his power, for he was a man not to be trifled with—a stern, severe, uncompromising moralist, passionate at times, and never indulging in the gentler feelings of humanity. We had frequent altercations, in which he was continually stinging me with reproaches for having shortened my mother’s life; and he never failed

to remind me of my ignorance, stubbornness, and evil habits. I thought him a savage. Soon after this I wrote a letter to Maria, informing her of the unforeseen circumstances which had prevented me from seeing her, and acquainting her with the plan I wished her to adopt till I could escape from my present confinement. I bribed a servant to put it into the post. You may imagine my indignation when, in the same hour, I beheld my guardian enter my room, looking more severe than I had ever seen him, and carrying my letter opened in his hand. Nothing could exceed the strong language he applied to my conduct, every word of which only served to increase the ill-will I felt towards him; and I replied in a tone and manner that the more increased his anger. We both became equally violent. At last, rendered passionate by some taunting epithet I had applied, he struck me a painful blow with his thick walking-stick. Without a moment's consideration, I dashed upon him with all the strength I possessed, and struck with my clenched fists right and left wherever I saw a part of his body I thought I could injure. But what could a youth of fifteen do against a strong man of forty? I was soon levelled to the ground; and, with the formidable weapon he possessed, my remorseless enemy rained on my defenceless body a shower of quick and heavy blows. Stunned and bruised, I was dragged from my own comfortable room to a gloomy and secure chamber in a distant part of the house, and then locked up like a felon, without a prospect of escape.

"All the evil principles of my nature now broke loose from the restraints which had confined them. I lay upon the ground, writhing my body and gnawing my flesh. A feeling of desperate revenge took possession of my thoughts, and I hated my guardian with a deadly hatred. Guardian I would not think him; he was a tyrant—an oppressor—a cold-hearted, unfeeling miscreant, whom to destroy would, I thought, be doing a commendable action. Not satisfied with the punishment he had inflicted, he kept me without my usual comforts, and set me to perform tasks beyond my capabilities. After I had endured this treatment some time with the same unbending spirit I had from the first evinced, I saw that the only hope I could entertain of ensuring an adequate revenge, would be by lulling my enemy into a fancied security. I therefore showed signs of repentance, ap-

plied with diligence to my studies, and changed all at once into a reasonable being. This apparent reformation deceived my guardian, and he relaxed in his severity. I continued the deception, and his behaviour towards me became more kind.

"I waited for my opportunity with feverish impatience. It came. When there was not a soul within call, I entered his room with a brace of loaded pistols, and commanded him to choose one; for, I told him, with all the emphasis of revenge, I was determined both of us should not leave the room alive. He thought I only intended to frighten him. He refused to accept either of the proffered weapons, threatened me with the severest punishment if I did not immediately surrender them, and advanced with the purpose of taking them from me. With a ferocious curse I pointed both weapons towards his body, and told him to move at his peril. His only reply was a blow on my head with his stick. I shot him dead!"

I was not prepared for this confession, and started back with an expression of dread I could not conceal.

"Your looks condemn me," continued the Fatalist, "but not more completely than I have condemned myself. Yet why am I to blame? I did not create myself, nor did I create those circumstances that influenced my actions. Why was I not made as good as another! Why was my nature made so prone to evil? Fate is partial; she makes one man a philanthropist, and another a murderer. I did as I was made to do. I shed the blood of a tyrant. Yet I will not blame him for the character an omnipotent necessity made him assume. He would have made a better guardian, if Fate had made him a kinder man.

"I had so arranged everything, that it was generally supposed my guardian had died by his own hand. I was never suspected. Soon after this I became a ward in chancery, and my wants were more kindly attended to. Masters were engaged to instruct me; and I then entered with such application into the spirit of my studies, that I quickly understood as much as older boys, and more perfectly, of the nature of thoughts and things. In due time I was sent to Oxford. That circumstance I shall always regard with satisfaction for having procured me your friendship."

I bowed my acknowledgment of the compliment.

"You must not suppose," said Stillborn, "that I forgot Maria. The impression she had made upon me was not to be erased except by death. Upon the very first opportunity I proceeded to town. I found the house she had inhabited, tenanted by people who had never seen her, and consequently could not direct me to her residence. In the utmost anguish of mind I searched for her in all directions, and instituted every inquiry. My exertions were unsuccessful. One evening, while in the pit of one of the theatres, I thought I saw Maria in the public boxes, elegantly dressed, talking to a gentleman by her side. The delight I experienced at the discovery was only equalled by my disappointment, when, after searching every part of the theatre, no person bearing the least resemblance to her was to be found. I continued my inquiries whenever I was in the metropolis, and engaged others to assist me in the search; but as no gleam of success rewarded my labours, I began to think that she was dead, and that my apparent neglect must have been the cause of her death.

"It was during my first vacation at the university, as I was returning from a political dinner in the city, rather elevated with wine, I was accosted by one of those unfortunate females who throng our public streets. The night was foggy, and I paid little attention to her features; but I allowed her to lead me through a labyrinth of dark alleys and narrow courts, till we arrived at a mean-looking house, in the dirtiest row of buildings I ever beheld. My companion pushed open a glass door, partly covered with a green curtain; and I followed her, scarcely knowing what I was about, up a filthy narrow staircase, into a room scarcely more inviting, furnished only with a bed of the humblest kind, two or three broken chairs, and a dilapidated table. As she placed the candle on the table I had an opportunity of observing her features. It sobered me an instant.

"'Good God, Maria!' I exclaimed, as I sunk for support against the bedstead. She gazed at me for some moments with a look of mingled insanity and intoxication, and flung herself into my arms. I was shocked to observe the change which had taken-place in her features. Her faded, sunken cheeks were daubed over with rouge, and her dark eyes gleamed out of their deep sockets with an expression unnatural and restless. Her lips were thin and bloodless;

and her black glossy hair, once so silken and beautiful, now looked coarse and uncombed. Her full and graceful form had shrunk into a mere shadow.

“‘You are come, then!’ she exclaimed, starting from her position, and gazing on me with a look so wild, that I shrunk from it in alarm. ‘But you are here when I have ceased to expect you. They told me you never meant to come—and they called me a fool for believing in man’s promises. But I still hoped you would not abandon me to the terrible desolation I have known; and I long looked for you to save me from the shame that has been spotting me like a pestilence. You have come at last—once more I am yours. Again we shall be happy.’

“She threw her arms round my neck, and attempted to press her lips on mine. I felt her breath burning hot upon my face, steaming with the fumes of ardent spirits.

“‘Not now, Maria! not now!’ said I, as I endeavoured to extricate myself from her embrace.

“‘Nay, we will not part so soon!’ cried the unfortunate girl, as she again proffered her unwelcome caresses. I shrank from her with visible repugnance.

“She noticed my disgust, and a fearful change immediately passed over her features. I had stirred up all the revengeful passions of the Italian. She placed herself before me—her eyes flashing with fury, and her limbs trembling with rage.

“‘So this is all I am to expect!’ she exclaimed bitterly. ‘Scorned, thrust aside, and trampled on! And thus treated by one who robbed me of my everlasting happiness, and left me to be the victim of a thousand pollutions. Have I borne shame and hatred—the contempt of one sex, the loathing of the other, and the execrations of all—to be so used? Accursed wretch!’ she continued more vehemently, ‘give me back my immortal purity of soul—restore me my treasured innocence of heart—make good to me the vows you pledged before Heaven, so often and with so deep an earnestness, or I will have so ample a revenge—I will make such bloody retribution—I will force from you so terrible an *amende*—that all the world shall acknowledge my wrongs have been most completely avenged. What hinders me now?’ she exclaimed furiously, as she snatched up a long knife that lay on the table. ‘What hinders me from punish-

ing your damnable treacheries ? Justice is denied ! Revenge alone is left ! I must have blood !—blood !—blood !”

“The weapon was raised, above her head, and her look was dark and deadly. My death appeared certain, for I felt it impossible to make any resistance. I could not stir. There was a fascination in her eyes that rooted me to the spot. I gazed on her with fear. As the last words were repeated, she drew back the knife as if with the intention of making a desperate plunge. Her bosom began to heave with the most tumultuous action. A moment elapsed. I observed a convulsive movement of the muscles of the face—a sound like that of choking proceeded from her throat—the revengeful expression of her look underwent a complete change—the knife dropped from her grasp—and she fell senseless upon the floor. I left with her all the money I had about me, gently laid her on the bed, and got out of the house without being observed. Next morning, I sent a person in whom I could confide to rescue her from her degraded condition ; but she had left the house, and was unknown to its inmates except by occasional visits. Since then I have never seen her. Fate has so persecuted me—so branded me—and made me so self-aborred—that I have become weary of dragging on this unprofitable life with so little credit to myself and so much evil to my fellow-creatures, and I only continue my miserable existence because I cannot end it till my destiny is accomplished.”

CHAPTER III.

The progress of error.—I become dissatisfied with my condition.—
 The description of a commerz.—I meet with another mysterious acquaintance.—A German university at two o'clock in the morning.
 —An insurrection of the students.

I HAD been some time a resident at Göttingen, making myself familiar with the treasures of German literature, but particularly studying most intently the mysteries of metaphysics. The philosophy of Kant appeared to be invested with a thousand charms, and I ventured to explore its

almost impenetrable obscurities. I also studied intently the metaphysics of Böhme, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Yet with what result? I soon knew, or appeared to know, all that the profoundest thinkers had acquired; but how small was that knowledge in comparison with what remained hidden from human investigation! Science had opened to me her apparently inexhaustible resources,—I had become familiarized with the wonders of art, and had penetrated into all the storehouses of learning. The treasures of reflection which had been amassed from the earliest ages—the discoveries of the inquirer and the efforts of the ingenious—became my property. I might use them for good or for evil; or I might hoard them up secretly and selfishly as others had done, and leave them for the sport of the destroyer. But I found them of little value. They were but pebbles snatched on the shores of truth from the ocean of time, polished with useless labour, and set with idle parade, to catch with their false brilliancy the admiration of an ignorant world. One by one I took up the gems of thought—fragment by fragment I examined the ore of the mind—and discovered that all was worthless, deceptive, and vain,—glittering baubles and shining dross. Philosophy I found to be a speculative dream, and wisdom nothing but a series of guesses at the truth.

From human knowledge I turned dissatisfied to the intelligence which I thought I could interpret in the book of nature: but the characters appeared to baffle my anxious studies; and the meanings seemed so involved in mystery, that I felt assured the volume was written in a language above my comprehension. The wisdom which was drawn from flowers and leaves, must, I fancied, be as perishable as their source. To the stars I lifted up my thoughts, and, in an investigation of their nature and properties, satisfied for some time the devouring hunger of my mind, I tried to ascertain their influence upon human actions, and to trace their effects upon life and happiness; not by the exalted wisdom of astronomy—for in ascertaining the truths of that noble science, I had wondered till I had ceased to wonder—but with the romantic lore of the astrologers. I studied the planetary powers—the occult meanings written in the open page of heaven—till I could discourse learnedly of nativities and horoscopes, thought that I could foresee the

evil and the good, and fancied that I knew the secrets of the past, the present, and the future. From the natural, I soon took refuge in the supernatural. I walked in a world of spirits. I became a believer in demonology and witchcraft. In a land where every rock has its legend, and every glen is distinguished by a tale of fearful wonderment, it was not difficult to share in the general superstition. I longed to have communion with these shadowy dwellers upon the earth, and by them to be initiated into the unrevealed mysteries of nature.

In these visionary speculations my mind was continually engaged, and I became restless and dissatisfied. I turned my thoughts upon myself. I endeavoured to account for my own motives, desires, sensations, and ideas. I sought to trace the origin of my perceptions of pain and pleasure, and to understand the principle of vitality. After having studied the organization of the living machine, I applied with renewed industry to the investigation of its usefulness, moral and physical. The latter I found universal in its application to things having any connection with existence; the former I found equally beneficial, though not in such general application. In pursuing the inquiry into the powers of the mind and the functions of the brain, I tried to ascertain the cause of imagination, humour, thoughtfulness, and all other appliances of genius. I wished to learn from what source the thinking faculty derived its conceptions of beauty, excellence, and happiness, and what degree of knowledge it could obtain of the social and material world. From the mental being it was easy to proceed to the moral. I was anxious to learn the nature of the soul, where it was situated, whence it came, whither it went. Whether it was the seat of vitality, of sensation, or of reflection, or exercised all these faculties; and whether it grew and decayed with the growth and dissolution of the body, or entered it in a perfect state at the birth, and left in the same state of perfection at death.

From the living I proceeded to the dead. I wished to know the nature of the power we call death, the cause of its influence, and the reason of its existence; and I was desirous of learning if the dead slept an eternal sleep, or only slumbered for a certain period. I was also inquisitive concerning the separation of soul and body, how long it

lasted, and whether at the resurrection they would again be united. I carried my speculations to more important matters. I thought of eternity, of infinitude, of the Omnipotent. I wondered how any period of time could be referred to, which possesses neither beginning nor end : and deemed it strange that space should exist, which was immeasurable. The philosophy of the Fatalist continually haunted me ; and although I did not adopt its doctrines, they frequently exercised an influence I found it impossible to resist. I thought that if this world were governed by two principles—the good, which is almighty, and the bad, which is universal—why does not the better and more powerful spirit destroy the weaker and vicious one, and let mankind enjoy the blessings of existence free from sin and misery ? and as my inquisitive nature wandered from world to world far into the illimitable, inquiring into the wonders of birth and destiny, of heaven and of fate, of free will and necessity, my mind was lost in the obscurities of the incomprehensible, and, as a natural consequence, not being able to understand, I began to doubt. Perplexed, confused, and entangled in a labyrinth of conflicting ideas, the progress from incredulity to infidelity was easy and rapid. I gradually lost sight of all religious principles, of all accountableness to a superior Being, and of all belief in a future state, and supplied their places with a code of morality based on what is styled philanthropy and justice, a confidence in the sovereignty of reason, and a conviction of the everlastingness of nature.

With these new principles I was not more happy than I had been with their predecessors. I was still dissatisfied, uneasy, and restless. My mind was always hurrying after some undiscovered truth. I still thirsted for some new knowledge. The desire of knowing all that was hidden came upon me like a devouring appetite. My books I flung aside as useless—religion I condemned as idle—science I discarded as vain. My spirit wandered about in the regions of the obscure, like a blind man in a strange place. I became a dreamer of dreams, a visionary, an enthusiast. I made for myself a religion. I set up an idol in my own heart, and fell down to it in worship. Having rejected the existence of a spirit of good—observing the misery, the pain, and the wickedness diffused over the whole world—I began to believe in the omnipotence of evil. This strength-

ened my belief in the supernatural. I fancied that the air was peopled with spirits invisible to mortal sight except on extraordinary occasions; that to them all things were known; and only by their assistance could the laws which govern the human race, the earth, the heavens, and all visible and invisible things, be ascertained. I brooded upon the possibility of establishing an intercourse with one of these dreaded creatures of darkness. I learned every form of conjuration by which it had been stated their presence might always be insured. My thoughts were continually employed in creating obedient familiars, in imagining fearful incantations, and in the probability of becoming the possessor of all the unwritten knowledge of the natural and supernatural world.

It is a strange, but not uninteresting study, to observe the progress of error. When the human mind is subject to a state of misgovernment, dangerous opinions will easily intrude, and will soon make themselves masters of the citadel. If the reason is influenced by the passions, it is quickly deprived of a well-regulated control. It must be exercised by discipline. The subordination of a well-governed intellect proceeds from its obedience to the Divine will; and the actions of the good man show that steadiness of purpose which is the natural result of order and design. Oh! would that the superior intelligence with which I have been gifted, had been under better government! That the education I received had been directed more towards the control of the passions than the advancement of the understanding! Strong in good thoughts, I should have been able to repress all unholy wishes. Confident in the benevolence of the great Philanthropist, I should have been satisfied with the condition of humanity, and firm in the belief of the sacred truth of the Gospel, and should have had no cause to question the purity of religion. How much suffering I might have been spared! What good I might have created! What happiness I might have enjoyed! But I have ever been a creature of impulse. There has never been any fixed principle of good within me. I have been the slave of passion. Hear me, O merciful Father, who hath snatched me from the grasp of the destroyer,—hear me confess the multitudinous evils which sprang forth out of the black depths of my abandoned soul when the sunshine of thy

countenance was turned from me. In the shadow of the nighttime, when my mind has been clouded with its own dark thoughts, I have forgotten thy immaculate presence. In the glory of the daylight, when thousands were lifting up their hearts and voices in thy most holy praise, I have turned away from thy worship. I have leagued with those who scorned thee. I have rebelled against thy power. I have done nothing but evil : and yet, from thy star-paved chambers, thou hast sent down thy ministering angels to encompass me with the shadow of thy holiness ; and the light of truth hath broken in upon me, and the voice of mercy hath sent its music to my soul !

I had for some days missed Stillborn from his usual haunts : I made inquiries for him. He had left his lodging, and, it was supposed, had also left Göttingen. It was strange, I thought, that he should leave the university, without acquainting me, or any one, of the reason of his departure. But there had always been a mystery about him I never could fathom. When I knew his history, I appeared to know as little of *him* as I had done before. His principles were mysterious ; his actions were mysterious ; his whole nature seemed a mystery. After vainly attempting to discover the place of his retreat, I felt convinced that, obeying, as he supposed, the dictates of that necessity which had led him into so many evils, he had secretly destroyed himself.

The sort of life led by the students of Göttingen is similar, in many respects, to the existence of a scholar in many other universities. The hours which were not devoted to study—always by far the most considerable portion of the night and day—were passed in drinking, smoking, and other idle dissipations. I was not backward in joining in them ; for I sought them as a refuge from my own thoughts ; but it was of little avail. They pursued me to the winehouse—they haunted me in the dance—they were with me during the lecture. I found no sleep by night, and I was restless during the day. It was the frequent custom of the young men to hold a *commerz* or drinking-bout ; and I was invited to share in the festivities of one which was to be given on a large scale by the members of the landsmanship to which I belonged. I proceeded to the place of meeting, which was a large room especially devoted to such purposes ; and

found, by the clock of the Jacobi Kirche, that I was a little beyond my time. I entered, but not unobserved. The clouds of smoke which filled the room, and prevented my immediate view of the inmates, did not screen me from observation; for I had scarcely crossed the threshold when I was recognised with a shout of welcome, and the crowded students immediately made room for me.

A long table, which went the length of the room, was covered with bowls of punch, bottles of wine, schnaps, and liqueurs of every kind, with an almost innumerable variety of drinking utensils: round this table, upon benches, stools, and chairs, were seated the scholastic revellers—all young, athletic, noisy burschen—each smoking his beloved meer-schaum; some in their shirt sleeves, and all wearing caps exhibiting the national colours. At the top, on a more elevated seat, with a drawn schläger before him as an emblem of peace, sat the präsident; and at the opposite extremity of the table, similarly situated, was an inferior officer, the second in authority upon such occasions. I was privileged, by residence in the university, to possess all the honours of a *goldner fuchs*, but there were many others around me who had only arrived at those inferior distinctions applied by the students to each other, to mark the number of semesters or terms each had kept. The younger *foxes* were the victims of the more experienced. The president, as is always the case, was one of the oldest houses present. He was a Hanoverian count, by name Friedrich von Tomback, possessed of a profusion of light hair, parted back from a face remarkable for nothing but a pair of huge mustaches. His tall figure was well set off by a pair of buckskin pantaloons, fitting tight to the leg, with hessian boots. He wore no coat, and his velvet waistcoat was thrown open, displaying a rich gold chain, attached to which was probably a miniature, or some other *galanterie waaren*. He had been the hero of many a similar festival, and I had met him before frequently. I had scarcely seated myself near him before he exclaimed—

“Ha! old fox, come at last! *Gott verdammemich!* Hadst thou been a minute later I would have had thee hanged. Come, thou! I challenge thee to drink *schmollis*. Fill!”

I filled with proper alacrity, replied to the mystic chal

lunge, then rising, we interlinked our right arms, drank off the glasses in that position, first allowing the lip and foot of each to come in amicable contact, kissed each other on both cheeks, declared our names, and with words expressive of our desire for a continuance of a friendship thus cemented, concluded this bacchanalian ceremony. Other challenges followed in quick succession, were immediately accepted, and as quickly disposed of. The festivity soon became universal. There was a feeling of deep enthusiasm exhibited by the young men who formed this meeting, which made it far superior to the scenes of a similar character I have witnessed at other times, and in other places. The most patriotic sentiments were expressed, language the most poetical and exalted was breathed, and wishes for the regeneration of Germany, and for the happiness of human nature, were loudly and generally spoken. To increase the harmony of the hour, most of the musically inclined commenced calling out for a song. After some pressing, the president, with much humour, and considerable emphasis, sang the following choice specimen of lyrical latinity :—

“ Dulce cum sodalibus sapit vinum bonum,
Osculari virgines, dulcius est donum;
Donum est dulcissimum lyracen Maronum,
Si his tribus gaudeam, sperno regis thronum.

In me Bacchus excitat Veneris amorem,
Venus mox poeticum Phœbi dat furorem !
Immortalem Phœbus dux comparat honorem,
Væ mihi, si tribus his infidelis forem ;

Sed tyrannus jubeat : ‘ Vinum dato ! ’—darem,
‘ Non amato virgines ! ’ ægre non amarem ;
‘ Frange lyram, abjice ! ’ pertinax negarem !
‘ Lyram da, seu morere ! ’—canens expirarem ! ”

The loud shouts of applause, and violent thumping of the table which followed had scarcely subsided, when another *cantilena potatoria* was commenced at the other end of the table, by a fiery-visaged sacrificer at the shrine of Bacchus ; an old fox called Hans Schluck. This was no other than the well-known effusion of Walter de Mapes, commencing with “ Mihi est propositum in taberna mori ; ” and this was equally well received. Other songs followed in quick succession, many of which were German, and all breathed the

spirit of sociality and festivity. A handsome youth, with fair blue eyes, and clear complexion, was called upon to contribute to the general harmony. He was evidently a young fox, recently caught; and, with the peculiar modesty of youth, was endeavouring to excuse his want of skill; but a sturdy law student, who sat near him, in a pair of great jackboots, nearly enveloping his thick leather breeches, and a coarse frock-coat hanging loose upon his huge shoulders, began to bully him.

"*Ein tausend Teüfel!*" he exclaimed. "What, thou? Not sing this once, Gerhard Krämer? Mad folly! Thou canst sing like a nightingale. Open thy voice, quick, or thou shalt dance as well as sing, and that to thine own minstrelsy! Try, now do! 'Tis as easy as *Ein Mädchen zu Falle bringen.*"

A laugh was sure to follow any speech from Heinrich Henker, although, from his coarseness and violence, he was not a favourite with many of the students. On the present occasion he succeeded in creating some mirth, at the expense of the youthful Gerhard; but the laughter, instead of confusing the handsome student, appeared to gift him with confidence; for, looking round upon the group of laughers by whom he was surrounded, with a proud air, and a look of peculiar intelligence, he commenced:—

"Lieschen! when first I met those azure eyes,
 There beam'd such lustre in their light,
 , No ray new born of eastern skies
 Possess'd a beauty half so bright.
 And in thy smile such sunshine dwelt,
 Methought that Zoroaster's god there lay;
 So down before the shrine I knelt,
 In homage fond to praise and pray.

Lieschen! still rain on me those dazzling beams,
 And still beneath their blaze I'll bask;
 Nor envy then the flower's sweet dreams,
 Nor seek to taste the wine's rich flask:
 For where hath flower a sunbeam known
 As warm as flash beneath thine eyelids' shade?
 And where's the grape whose juice doth own
 The charm which o'er my heart is laid?

Lieschen! though fate to me unkind should prove,
 And far from thee my life should rest,
 Ne'er shall that form of light and love
 Be darken'd in my glowing breast.

Awhile thou sweetly breathest here,
 My spirit o'er the ambrosial air shall glide ;
 And when thou seek'st a purer sphere,
 'Twill find its home by thy dear side !"

Loud and long were the plaudits which marked the conclusion of this little love-song. They had, however, scarcely subsided, when a divinity student, called Hugo Messingen, a sad reprobate, sang the following verses, which caused considerable amusement at the expense of the last singer :—

"Why art thou so melancholy ?
 Dost thou love ?—'tis idle folly !
 Would'st thou have thy Sacharissa ?—
 Kiss her !

If with proud repulsive glances
 She doth meet thy warm advances ;
 When thou dost again caress her,
 Press her !

Should her scornful frown grow blacker
 While thou fondly dost attack her,—
 Nothing will the girl enamour—
 Damn her !"

"*Himmel Donnerwetter !*" exclaimed Rudolph Aufwecken, a noisy student of medicine, to a knot of students as noisy as himself. "What a devil's hubbub is here ! Do ye dare to get drunk before your betters ! And thou, too, peacock-voice, stop thy scream, and listen to the song of the noble Count Otto von Kostgänger." The Count Otto was a noble-looking youth, dressed with more display than any of his companions. His features were expressive and pleasing, and his eyes beamed with an enthusiasm it was impossible to resist. He commenced the following patriotic song :—

"*Oh Deutschland ! mein liebes Deutschland !* still my spirit clings to thee,

Like the tree unto the mountain—like the river to the sea ;
 It glories in thy deep beauty, and it loveth thy rich worth,
 As a star in yon blue heavens loves the waters of the earth.

CHORUS. *Oh Deutschland ! mein liebes Deutschland !*

Oh Deutschland ! mein liebes Deutschland ! there's a loveliness divine
 In the depths of thy dark forests, in the valleys of thy Rhine ;

It filleth thy land with heroes, whose fond hearts are true and bold,
And gives smiles unto thy maidens bright as sunshine upon gold.

CHORUS. *Oh Deutschland! mein liebes Deutschland!*

Oh Deutschland! mein liebes Deutschland! though the foe hath o'er
thee pass'd,

'Tis his bones that pave thy highways, 'tis his groans upon the
the blast;—

May blessings, a thousand blessings! upon all who love thee
throng;

And a world of blackest curses upon those who'd do thee wrong!

CHORUS. *Oh Deutschland! mein liebes Deutschland!*

It was an extraordinary sight to observe the deep silence of the revellers during the singing of each verse, and the earnestness of feeling with which they appeared to enter into the chorus. The sentiment was evidently not lost upon them, and their hearts went with their voices. When it was over, the room rang with the shouts of the young patriots; and the healths of illustrious men, and sentiments in honour of Germany, were enthusiastically uttered, and tumultuously repeated. The riot which this occasioned was in an instant checked by the commencement of the *Landesvater*, by the *präses*. As it would be impossible to do justice to this celebrated composition in a translation, I will give it in the original:—

LANDESVATER.

“Alles schweige!
Jeder neige
Ernsten Tönen nun sein Ohr!
Hört, ich sing' das Lied der Lieder,
Hört es, meine deutschen Brüder,
Hall'es, wieder froher Chor!

Deutschlands Söhne!
Laut ertöne
Euer Vaterlandsgesang!
Dem Beglückter seiner Staaten,
Dem Vollender edler Thaten;
Töne euer Lobgesang!

Wilhelm lebe!
Ihn erhebe
Jeder brave Musensohn!
Herz und Hand dir, Herr, zu weihen,
Sammeln wir uns hier in Reihen,
Segnen dich auf Hannover Thron.

Hab' und Leben
 Dir zu geben
 Sind wir allesammt bereit,
 Sterben gern zu jeder Stunde,
 Achten nicht des Todes Wunde,
 Wenn das deutsche Vaterland gebout.

Lied der Lieder,
 Hall'es wieder :
 Gross und deutsch sey unser Muth !
 Seht hier den geweihten Degen ;
 Thut wie brave Bursche pflegen,
 Und durchbohrt den freien Hut !

Seht ihn blinken
 In der Linken,
 Diesen Schläger, nie entweiht !
 Ich durchboh'r den Hut, und schwöre :
 Halten will ich stets auf Ehre,
 Stets ein braver deutscher Bursche seyn.

Nimm den Becher,
 Wackrer Zecher,
 Vaterlän'd' schen weines voll !
 Nimm den Schläger in die Linke
 Bohr' ihn durch den Hut, und trinke
 Auf des deutschen Vaterlandes wohl !

Landesvater
 Schutz und Rather,
 Unser Wilhelm lebe hoch !
 Ewig soll mein König leben,
 Und mein Mädchen auch daneben,
 Er für alle, sie allein für mich !"

Every three lines of these verses were first sung by the präses, and repeated by the chorus. During the singing of the last three verses, the president and vice took up the drawn schlägers which lay before them, and placing their caps upon the points, each passed the weapon to his neighbour on the left, who did the same with his cap, and the swords went round the table till the caps of all the students were fixed on the tops of the two blades. The most noisy demonstrations of bacchanalian joy followed, and every glass was drained of its contents. But amid the confusion order was again called, and as soon as its restoration could be effected, the präses and his assistant took off the top cap from the sword, and placed it upon the head of his right-

hand neighbour, who was its owner ; and changing the melody to a more lively movement, he sang the following verse as the weapon was passed to each individual, the chorus repeating the same words with increasing energy, till every head was covered :—

“ Komm du blanker Weihedegen,
Freier Männer freie Wehr
Bringt ihn festlich mir entgegen,
Von durchbohrten Hüten schwer.
Lasst uns festlich ihn entlasten !
Jede Scheitel sey bedeckt !
Und dann lasst ihn unbefleckt
Bis zur nächsten Feier rasten ! ”

This verse concluded with the same uproar as before. Idle as this ceremony might seem to a stranger, there was none present who did not enter into it with a feeling of enthusiasm which divested the proceedings of every appearance of buffoonery. It was a species of devotion, in which all joined with the deepest sincerity ; and the music came swelling out with a harmony so rich, and the looks of the singers were so wild and enthusiastic, that the mere commonplace of the affair was lost in the sublimity in which it seemed to be invested. Now commenced a scene it is impossible to describe. Drinking, shouting, singing, and laughing were proceeding to the noisiest limit of social revelry. All were greatly exhilarated, many showed signs of intoxication, and others were getting into corners to hide the effect of their potations from their companions. The maddest jests were scattered about—the oddest practical jokes were played—and the funniest stories told that could possibly be imagined. In one part of the room a group were attempting to sing a glee—at another two or three were quarrelling about some unintentional insult—a third set were blacking the face of a sleeping “ fox ” with a burnt cork—and a fourth were watching a pair of chess-players, who, regardless of the confusion around, were carrying on their favourite game as seriously as if the world depended upon the success of their moves. A few, valiant with punch-royal, had wandered out with the determination of seeking some “ scandal,”—that is, insulting some one. The præses was vainly endeavouring to restore order.

At this instant I caught the eyes of a strange student gazing very intently upon me. I had seen him several times before regarding me with the same earnestness, and there was something in the expression of his gaze which I thought peculiarly forbidding. Why he should watch me so narrowly I could not tell. He was a perfect stranger to me; and when I described him to some of the oldest "houses," they said that they had never seen the individual. His name I could not learn, nor his abode. When I sought him he always avoided me, and when I least expected his appearance he was sure to be present. His dress was very similar to that generally worn by the students, though there appeared to be something peculiar in the fashion of his garments differing from those worn by all the burschen I had observed. From under his cap escaped two or three dark curls as black as night. His mustaches were of the same colour, and of a portentous length. His eyes I could not gaze upon. They pierced through me: I seemed to feel them when they looked upon me. His complexion was dark. His features, though not irregular, possessed an expression very unprepossessing: it was of withering sarcasm, and contemptuous scorn. I felt offended at being the subject of continual scrutiny by a stranger; but when I met his gaze I became cowed, abashed, and almost afraid. I thought it strange that he should haunt me so. When I was at the lectures of philosophy, I have seen him opposite—when attending those on law, I have found him close at hand. If I took a walk on the banks of the Leine he seldom failed to cross my path, and I could not speak to a pretty girl in any of the neighbouring villages without discovering the stranger apparently observing me. I met him in the winehouse and in the church, in the riding-school and in the fencing-room. Often and close as he had been to me, whenever I could summon sufficient resolution to move towards him he walked away, and when I sought him he disappeared. The strangeness of these circumstances annoyed me, for they appeared to be occasioned by some one who was endeavouring to amuse himself at my expense. This I was determined to put an end to at any hazard, and, considerably elevated by the wine I had drunk, seeing my tormentor, as I thought him, glaring at me from the opposite side of the table, I hastened round to ask him the meaning of his

extraordinary proceedings; but when I came to the place where he had stood I saw no one, and I immediately became the sport of those around me who witnessed my surprise. I looked about the room, but he was nowhere to be seen.

The greater portion of the company by this time were more or less intoxicated. Their hallooing, screaming, and yelling became quite insupportable. Some of them attempted to waltz, and a pair of waltzers managed to come with a sudden and tremendous shock against the chess-players, scattered them, their table, and its contents in every direction. This occasioned several quarrels. Ill names were applied, and insults offered, which could only be erased by an appeal to the *schläger*. Many challenges were given and accepted. The glasses had already suffered considerably; but the modest Gerhard Krämer, in the very madness of his mirth, leaped upon the table, and commenced dancing with the vigour of a drunken dervish, scattering empty punch-bowls, bottles, glasses, and decanters about, till their fragments strewed the floor. A similar kind of fury was now manifesting itself in every part of the room. Chairs were smashed, tables upset, benches splintered, and empty bottles were sent spinning through the windows; when, in the midst of a howling and uproar which would have done credit to a band of savages, in consequence of some sign which I was unable to perceive, every individual in the room became as quiet as a lamb, and the voice of a remarkably intellectual-looking young man, Karl Glück, a student of philosophy, who a moment since was one of the maddest of the party, with a spirit of the most exalted enthusiasm sang the following verses :—

“ Rise ! brothers, rise ! While the wine draught is flowing,
The tyrants their chains closer round us are throwing :
There are deeds to be done by the brave and the wise,—
For justice—for liberty—rise ! brothers, rise !

On ! brothers, on ! Drink no more from that fountain,
There's a stir in the city—a voice in the mountain ;
If we slumber, 'tis crushed—if we linger, 'tis gone,—
For knowledge—for happiness—on ! brothers, on !

Strike ! brothers, strike ! We have suffered aggression ;
We must struggle with power—we must battle oppression ;
There is freedom for all in the sword and the pike,—
For truth—for humanity—strike ! brothers, strike !”

Every student maintained a calm and dignified silence while the song lasted. Those who were nearly overpowered by their sacrifices at the shrine of the jolly god, endeavoured to preserve their perpendicular, and looked as if they were on the eve of entering into some important action. The soberer portion of the community seemed to listen with feelings of the deepest excitement; and when the singer concluded, there arose a yell absolutely stunning; every kind of weapon was immediately snatched up, and shouting "Down with the Philistines," they all rushed to the door, tumbling over each other down the stairs, till they entered the street. A body of *jägers*, the academical police, who went by the nickname of "laces," (from wearing a green uniform trimmed with black lace,) attracted by the riot, had assembled before the house. No sooner did the burschen behold these, whom they considered their mortal enemies, than they dashed at them, wrested from them the hateful staves that had so often stopped their career by coming in contact with their legs, and used them with considerable effect upon their owners. The struggle lasted but a short time. The laces fled for a reinforcement, except those disabled from running, who were left to the mercy of the conquerors; and with shouts of triumph, that brought all the inhabitants to their windows, the victors pursued their flying enemy.

It was about two o'clock in the morning, and the effect of the wild screams of the frantic scholars must have seemed sufficiently alarming to the townspeople, who were disturbed from their quiet slumbers. The rioters at last came opposite to the dwelling of the chief of the *jägers*, to whom, in derision, they had given the title of *aga*. In a few minutes every window in the house was shivered, in the midst of shouts of defiance and exclamations of contempt. They had scarcely completed this work of demolition, when a stronger party of the *jägers* came up, headed by the *aga*, furious at the destruction of his premises. A regular fight commenced between the two parties, and it raged for some time with extraordinary fury. Missiles of every description were thrown at the approaching laces; everything which could be used as a weapon was brought into requisition; and some serious blows were given and received. At last the students gave way before the superior force which was

brought against them ; but in their retreat they called out to their fellow-students, with the well-known cry "Bursche-heraus !" And in the course of a few minutes hundreds of burschen, masked and armed, who had not taken any part in the affray, were observed to join the rioters. Soon the retreating party became again the assailants, and with such effect that they quickly dispersed their opponents. In their flight the aga fell into the hands of the victors. He was a tall, awkward fellow, with a remarkably long sharp nose, and a thin cadaverous body.

As soon as the capture was made known, there arose a difference of opinion as to how the prisoner was to be disposed of. Some were for hanging him ; a few, less sanguinary, were desirous of inflicting a flogging ; many wished to have him dragged through the ditch, but the greater number had other views. Struggling, squalling, and praying for mercy, he was forced to the pump, and there he was pumped upon till every student who could get near enough had had a turn at the pump-handle, and the skin and clothes of the unfortunate victim were saturated with water. They then set him on his legs, and commenced pelting him with mud till he gained the shelter of his own house, in such a pickle that no person could have imagined him to be the superior officer of the jägers. Almost every student had now left his bed to join his companions, and they amounted to a body of between one and two thousand. But they committed no more mischief. After having gone round the town without opposition, howling, yelling, screaming, and singing in a hundred different keys, and having sufficiently expressed their disapprobation under the windows of those professors who had made themselves unpopular, every one retired to his lodging.

During the course of the day it was generally expected that some notice would be taken of the disturbance by the authorities, and preparations were made by the young men to resist any attempt at punishment. The day, however, passed off quietly, and so did several others. No one was cited to the concilium ; the pro-rector had published no proclamation : and the academical senate maintained a dignified silence. But the officers of the university were proceeding cautiously. To pass over such an offence they knew would soon lead to the entire destruction of their au-

thority ; and to punish the guilty, where all were concerned, they found equally difficult. They sought out for some of the least influential of the rioters ; and they selected two young Poles, who had recently joined the university, as fit objects for punishment. These were secretly hurried to the Carcer, (the university prison,) and sentence of expulsion was immediately pronounced against them. When this transaction became known, the students flocked to the market-place,—every one indignant, and all desirous of making a powerful stand against what they considered this great injustice. Yet nothing was done. At last Hans Schluck, for the greater convenience of his companions, proposed an adjournment to a field a little way beyond the walls of the town. This was agreed to, amid noisy acclamations, and thither they all proceeded. A rude sort of platform was quickly erected, and several orators addressed the meeting. They detailed their wrongs, described the many indignities under which they laboured, and expressed a determination not to suffer them any longer. But no remedy had been stated. No one knew what ought to be done. The next speaker was a young nobleman, the son of one of the chief ministers at Hanover. By his liberality, and other good qualities, he had become a general favourite, and possessed more influence over his associates than any other student in the university. His appearance was hailed with a shout of welcome. Count Pomeranze briefly entered into the particulars of the circumstance which had caused the meeting ; and then, in a speech at once short, powerful, and eloquent, he convinced every one present that he was the victim of an atrocious system of tyranny.

“ *Deutscher burschen !* ” he exclaimed, “ this is not to be borne.”

“ No, no ! ” replied a thousand voices in a breath, “ we will die first ! ”

“ We must put it down ! ” continued the orator.

“ We will ! we will ! ” echoed his auditors.

“ There is but one way,” said the count, “ of doing it effectually, and that one we must adopt ; but, my brothers, this can only be rendered successful by a perfect union of purpose on your part. You must be firm, bold, and united.”

“ We are ! we are ! ” exclaimed hundreds of his excited listeners ; while others, to testify their readiness to follow

the directions of the speaker, shouted, with the full strength of their lungs, "Down with the senate!"—"No surrender!"—"Liberty or death!" and other exclamations equally expressive.

"My brothers," exclaimed the orator emphatically, "we must have an *aussug*!" The most vociferous acclamations now rent the air, testifying the approbation of the assembly of the advice given them; and cries of "Bravo, Count Pomeranze!" rose amid the cheers which marked his retirement from the rostrum.

Before the meeting broke up, it was agreed that an *aussug*, or turn-out of the students, should take place the next morning; and that the university, and all it contained, should be put in *verchiss*, (proscribed, or sent to coventry,) till the grievances of the burschen had been redressed. It must be remembered, that the students of the German universities have a code of laws of their own creation, by which all their proceedings are governed. To this they yield implicit obedience. Preparations were immediately made to carry into effect the sentence passed against the university. Every student busied himself in packing up his goods and chattels; for none dared remain in the town when the others had quitted it. A great portion of the night was passed in these arrangements; but many amused themselves by marching through the streets in bodies, making as much noise as they could, and inciting their associates by the cry of "Burscheheraus!" to join them. A few windows were broken, and an unlucky "poodle," or beadle, an object of peculiar dislike to a student, fell into their hands, was dragged through a ditch, and half killed.

CHAPTER IV.

March of the students from Göttingen, followed by their attack and dispersion of a regiment of horse.—Successful issue of the revolt.—My first acquaintance with Mephistophiles.—Our moonlight ride to the Brocken.—The jubilee in the haunted glen, and the manner in which I obtain the privilege to pass the gates of knowledge.

THE morning was ushered in with the busy hum of preparation. The students appeared to be fully aware of the importance of their operations. At an early hour they began to throng, in parties of half a dozen or more, to the general rendezvous, which was the market-place; and before nine o'clock, the whole body having assembled, with all their worldly possessions, were arranged in their different landsmannschaften, each under the control of a leader, appointed by themselves; the chief command having been given, with general approbation, to Count Pomeranze. Many were on horseback, but by far the greater portion were on foot, and all possessed some offensive weapon. Clubs, schlägers, rapiers, guns, and pistols, were most ostentatiously displayed; and certainly the scholars, to the peaceable "Philistines" of the town, presented a formidable array. The country of every student might be told by the national colours worn on his cap. The Prussian was recognised by the black and white; the Hanoverian, by red, dark blue, and gold; the Russian, green, pale blue, and white; the Mecklenburgher, red and gold; the Lüneburgher, dark blue, red, and white; the Bremenser, green, red, and gold; and the Burschenshafter, the members of a political society for the regeneration of Germany, in existence in all the universities, was known by the colours black, crimson, and gold. Besides these there were the Holsteiners, the Bavarians, the youth of Saxony, Saxe-Gotha, Nassau, Brunswick, and many others, whose national colours I forget. Having been formed into battalions, the burschen commenced their march, in regular military order, proceeding through the Weendeer Gate to the neighbouring village, there to encamp till the senate were forced to come to an

arrangement; and, accompanied by every musical instrument in their possession, in full chorus they sung the following verses:—

“Forward! brothers! comrades! friends!
And thy reign, oppression, ends.
Tyrant ne’er withstood the charm,
Compass’d in a freeman’s arm.
Forward!

From the east and from the west,
Comes a voice which ne’er shall rest;
Making every despot groan—
Giving all good men their own.
Forward!

North and south that spirit goes,
Freeing all whom bondage knows;
Might restores the golden flood,
Drained from out the poor man’s blood.
Forward!

Join our ranks with heart and hand,
Ye who love your father-land—
Ye who would not shame the grave,
Live in fear, and die a slave;—
Forward!

See, advancing knowledge strides,
Truth and freedom are her guides!
Look around!—the sight will prove
All the world is on the move.
Forward!

Where corruption’s fetid breath,
Breathes on justice pain and death,
Where alone the strong arm rules,
Church and state—the courts and schools—
Forward!

Where the good—the noble lie,
Cramm’d in jails to starve and die;
While in honour vice is led,
With a crown upon her head—
Forward!

Where, while chains are fixed on thought
Folly learns what folly taught;

Where they keep, while crime is free,
Knowledge under lock and key—
Forward!

Where the wisest men that teach
Practise what they do not preach;
Where the guides that lead the mind
Long have been both lame and blind—
Forward!

Should the lover's glory rest
On his maiden's dazzling breast,
While beneath her gaze he basks,
We will give him all he asks—
Forward!

Should the man, whose daily toil
Makes the rich man's hoarded spoil,
See his children sinking, pine,
We will give them meat and wine—
Forward!

Merit suffering in distress;
Virtue, the companionless;
Labour tasked, and tasked in vain;
Skill applied to other's gain—
Forward!

Valour owning nought but scars,
Poverty in prison bars,
Worth that hath been forced to hide,
Genius ever thrust aside—
Forward!

Age with unrespected years;
Youth, whose joys are turned to tears;
Piety, whose prayers are mocked;
Modesty, whom vice hath shocked—
Forward!

Come, oppressed innocence;
Come, neglected excellence;
All who now desire to be
Good and happy, wise and free—
Forward!

Come and give the hungry food,
Join and seek the gen'ral good;

Place the eagle with the dove,
Foster universal love—
Forward!

Down with pride and empty gaud,
Shining guilt and brazen fraud!
Truth must now the world subdue;
Laws grow old, but we'll make new—
Forward!

On to triumph—on to pow'r,
On where fame her gifts will show'r,
On!—the world must be unchain'd,
Earth be saved, or heaven be gain'd—
Forward!"

The students had scarcely completed their encampment, formed their outposts, and made the necessary arrangements for holding their position, before intelligence was brought that a whole regiment of mounted chasseurs were proceeding from the town, sent by the authorities to force the malecontents to obedience. In an instant all was bustle; but there was not the slightest vestige of confusion. Orders were given by Count Pomeranze, conveyed by his aid-de-camps to the officers of the different divisions of his academical army, and obeyed with the strict discipline of a veteran corps. Resistance, if attacked, was resolved upon, and all prepared themselves with the greatest alacrity to act up to that resolution. Flints were looked to, arms were loaded, swords were drawn, and evolutions performed with true military precision. The villagers concealed themselves in alarm, while the expected regiment came galloping into the village, and halted in the street. The commander, who was no other than the aga who had been so ill used a short time before, seeing a crowd of young men a little distance from him, unconcernedly smoking their meerschaums, thought his business would be easy; so, in a tone of command, mingled with much abuse, he ordered them to return immediately to the university, and to give up their leaders. At this moment not an armed student was to be seen anywhere; and the aga, fancying he had been misinformed as to the means of defence possessed by his opponents, was not so cautious in his proceedings as he ought to have been. Two or three students went sauntering up as if to parley

with the chief of the jägers ; and having come close to him, they commenced explaining the reasons which had induced them to take the extraordinary step they had done : these were followed by others, who approached, by a few at a time, the rest of the officers ; and while attracting their attention, some hundreds of the students came up in straggling parties, as if to hear what was going on, mingled with the men, and entered into conversation with them.

The aga, however, soon got into a passion ; would not listen to any explanation ; demanded the authors of the tumult ; called them all the opprobrious names he could mention ; and seizing upon Count Pomeranze, directed his men to make prisoners of every student they could lay hold of. He had scarcely given the command, when himself, and nearly one half the troop, were unhorsed. The windows and walls of the neighbouring houses were, at the same moment, thronged with young men with guns presented at their opponents ; and a troop of mounted students, with drawn schlägers, were observed coming full gallop down the very road by which the soldiers had arrived. The jägers, who were employed by the university more for show than use, seeing their retreat cut off, and themselves hemmed in a narrow street, exposed to the fire of the surrounding houses, were seized with a panic. They put spurs to their horses, and galloped for their lives, amid a tremendous shower of missiles, a discharge of fire-arms of every description, and the shouts of the victors ; and pursued for some distance by the small troop of mounted students, they never pulled rein, or looked behind them, till they found themselves safe in their barracks ; leaving most of their officers, and above a hundred of their comrades, prisoners of war.

I had not been an unconcerned spectator of these proceedings. Indeed, the frequency with which I had shared in such disturbances had procured for me fine and imprisonment more than once ; and had, consequently, increased my popularity with my companions. I had been an active leader in the last riot, and my services on that night gained me the command of our small body of cavalry on the present occasion.

The pro-rector and his associates began to be seriously alarmed at the dreadful accounts which were in circulation

as to the strength and spirit of the revolted scholars. They knew that if these young men left the university, Göttingen would be ruined, the professors starved, and the inhabitants beggared; for without students there could be no subsistence for any one; so, feeling convinced that the bürscher were determined, and had the means of enforcing their determination, the senate very wisely came to a resolution of endeavouring to bring them back at any sacrifice. For that purpose the sentence of expulsion against the Poles was annulled; they were then set at liberty, and sent to the camp of their comrades, bearing the consent of the senate to all their demands.

The ambassadors of the senate found their fellow-students much elated by their success. Considerable difference of opinion prevailed in the camp as to what ought next to be done. Some were so excited by their triumph as to be desirous of proclaiming a revolution, and marching upon Hanover: others were for entering the university, and punishing the senate. But as soon as their liberated companions had explained their mission, all those in authority agreed to accept the terms proposed, and the *verschiss* was abrogated.

The revolted returned to their allegiance, and many a *commerz* was held that night in honour of the grand triumph they had achieved. I, however, did not join their festivity that evening. Full well I remember that eventful night. Never will the extraordinary circumstances with which it was distinguished be erased from my memory; no! not if my existence was prolonged a thousand years.

I sat in my study. The thoughts to which I had so long been a victim haunted me. They hemmed me in on every side. I had some time since made myself acquainted with all oral and written knowledge concerning necromancy and astrology: but it gave me no insight into the secrets I thirsted to possess. A lingering credulity in the supernatural existed within me which I could not conquer. A belief in the agency of the spiritual world returned upon me like a dream; and while I remained under its influence, I thought of every species of magic practised when the black art possessed its most celebrated professors. The mind got tossed in a sea of chimeras. Conceits, the very fungi of the intellect, sprung up in a most luxuriant crop. Im-

agination wandered into the unknown world like a missionary in a savage land, feeding upon high hopes and lofty wishes, yet meeting with nothing but darkness and ignorance. I thought how proud a thing it would be could I make the elemental spirits obedient to my will. What vast power should I gain, could I bind them by those fearful mysteries vaguely hinted at by the old necromancers. But what powerful abjuration would call them from the caves of darkness? What potent spell secure their subjection? I had recourse to the learning I had acquired. There all was confusion—chaos, lumber. I could arrive at nothing. No tangible idea presented itself. The mind seemed a whirlpool of thoughts, hurrying round and round, and drawing all stray opinions into its own black, devouring, unfathomable vortex. The pursuit of a feverish curiosity appeared to be turning my blood into fire. I was losing all relationship with humanity, and acquiring an imaginary familiarity with the powers of darkness. I fancied myself above the world, able to conquer my own nature, and sufficiently powerful to cope with the unseen agents that prevented my progress to the arcana of universal knowledge. I felt that the struggle within me was drawing to a crisis. An influence was upon me, directing me, supporting me. It was the presence of some powerful spirit of intelligence. Nature appeared opening her arms to receive me. The world was sinking beneath my feet. I wrestled with a tumult of conflicting emotions. I endured torture.

To calm the restlessness of my senses, I took up a volume that happened to lie before me : it was that wonderful production of the illustrious Goëthe—"Faust." I attempted to read. I had opened the book where the presence of the spirit is first manifested to the philosophic student. I read a few lines, and then could read no more.

"Oh!" I exclaimed, frantically, rising from my seat, and clasping my hands wildly together, "if there be any power which can minister to the devouring thirst for hidden knowledge that is now wasting my existence, appear! I claim thy assistance—I command thy presence!" As I spoke, I observed a cloud rising before me, and it continued increasing in blackness and size till it filled the room, and surrounded me with utter darkness. A deep unearthly voice arose from the centre of the vapour, saying—

"Thou hast called me! What wouldst thou have?"

"I would know all things!" I replied.

"Thy wish shall be granted!" exclaimed the voice; "but there are conditions."

"I will respect them," I said.

The darkness disappeared; and, to my great surprise, I observed before me the student by whose mysterious scrutiny I had been so much annoyed.

"In the name of the devil, what brings you here?" I asked indignantly, imagining that he had intruded into my apartment.

"Just so!" replied the stranger, with a smile of peculiar meaning. "'Tis in the name of the devil I come!"

"Then, in the name of the devil, you may return whence you came. I want not your company; and I am not in a humour to be trifled with!" I exclaimed.

"Why, how now, friend?" said the stranger. "Thou hast changed thy mind of a sudden! I have come by thy express invitation, not a moment since delivered; and I am of too courteous a nature to refuse my presence when called upon by so famous a philosopher as thyself!"

"I called thee not. Get thee hence, or thou shalt repent it!" I replied, seizing my schläger, and advancing towards him.

"Nay, most valiant of students!" he exclaimed, with a derisive laugh, "I will prove that thou hast invited my company."

I stopped to hear what he had to say.

"Thou didst command, a few minutes since," continued he, "the presence of some spirit who would direct thee to the gates of knowledge. I answered that summons. I come to give thee new life. I hasten to show thee new worlds; and in this way am I welcomed!"

"Who art thou?" I asked, eagerly gazing on him, with a mingled dread and pride.

"I am called Mephistophiles," he replied; "and if thou hast the courage to look on, and fear nothing, I will show thee the secret machinery of the world of which thou formest a part. Thou shalt see its hollowness. I will instruct thee in the mysteries of nature. Thou shalt behold her nakedness. I will be thy slave, thy servant, thy protector, thy instructor, thy friend. Thou shalt want for nothing—enjoy

all thy wishes—gratify thy utmost ambition. Pleasure, beauty, wealth, fame, and power shall become thine own. But if thou art desirous of throwing off the shackles of thy human existence, which prevent thee from becoming all thou desirest, I must introduce thee to some acquaintances of mine, who will divest thee of such earthly prejudices as still cling about thy simple nature. Art willing to accompany me?"

"I am," I replied, boldly, considering the object of my cherished hopes near its accomplishment.

"Thou hast a bold heart," said the spirit, with a smile, the expression of which was not at all pleasing, "worthy of the noble fate prepared for thee. Now lead the way. I must allow the master to do the honours here, because I cannot have free egress and ingress in a house unless I have been invited in and preceded out. I do not consider the law a very wise one, as applied to myself; but were it adopted by the world, they would, doubtless, find much advantage from it: it would exclude all unwelcome visitors."

I accordingly led the way out of the house, and we proceeded through the streets till we arrived beyond the walls, where two spirited coal-black horses were waiting for us under a tree. We mounted, and rode on. The conversation of my companion I found so amusing—so full of pleasant sarcasm and original thought—that I very shortly lost every vestige of dread; and as we rode towards the Hartz mountains, I became animated and gratified; and talked, laughed, and jested, just as if I was on an excursion of pleasure with a fellow-student. "Now," thought I, "I shall obtain the desire I have so long sought in vain. The mysteries, the secrets, the wonders, will be revealed to me." I felt swelled up with ambitious prospects. I spurned the idle learning of the world, and laughed to think how soon I might be able to stride like a colossus over the pigmy structures of human wisdom. I was going to be initiated into the philosophy of nature—to find the right interpretation of a volume no other could comprehend. With what a power should I be gifted! How superior should I be made to the blind, bigoted, besotted fools with whom I had associated! I should be a star among the clouds! With these ambitious thoughts I proceeded rapidly along, while the noble animal

on which I rode scarcely touched the ground, so extraordinary was its speed.

It was near midnight ; the stars were out in all their beauty, and the moon shone with a splendour which made everything look as bright as day. The scenery began to assume a most picturesque character. As we entered the regions of the Hartz our path became more wild and savage. The mountains lifted up their heads as if with a proud consciousness of their own sublimity, and the valleys spread out their alluring beauties before my admiring eyes. Torrents dashed along over the sharp rocks ; the dark ravine looked fearfully grand in the mysterious moonlight ; and the slopes of the lower range of hills were covered with luxuriant woods, wherein the oak and the beech were frequently observed covered with all the vernal glories of three centuries' growth. On the declivities stood the straggling hamlet ; and the summits of the hills were crowned with ruins of formidable castles, or with the ancient chateaux of the nobility. Quitting the town of Clausthal, we passed through a forest of pines, in which the trees grew so thickly together that it was almost impossible to proceed. As we passed along in the impenetrable shade of the forest, Mephistophiles leading the way, we could hear nothing but the sharp scream of the eagle from her lofty eyry in the adjacent rocks, mingled occasionally with the hoarse howl of the wolf prowling in the neighbourhood. Large bats came flying about us, uttering their unpleasant noise ; and the heavy wings of the great owl rose by our heads as the misshapen bird flew hooting after its prey. However, after we had descended for some distance along a most dangerous road, we entered the narrow Schlenberge Thal ; and, passing along this winding valley for a considerable way, by groups of cottages, and engines employed in washing and crushing the silver brought from the neighbouring mines, we found the mountains assume grander forms. Over the bridge which crosses the river we entered the Oker Thal, and soon met the river tumbling its foaming waves over huge fragments of rocks that had fallen from the precipitous banks into the channel through which the water rushes. At intervals, bold masses of granite, projecting from the steep sides of the hills, overhung the yawning gulf below. Clumps of lofty and venerable trees cast their sombre shades

over this fearful scene, investing it with a still deeper feeling of sublimity than independently it possessed.

We were now approaching the precincts of the mysterious Brocken, and the dark glens that intersected the mountains became more wild and grand. Towering masses of stone, in dark and rugged forms, shot up from the steep side of each narrow chasm. There stood the Rosstrappe, with its precipitous rocks, hanging fearfully over the Bode Thal, with the tortuous torrent dashing and foaming beneath. Vegetation flourished in all the luxuriance of nature. The pine, the beech, and the oak spread out their branches over dangerous precipices and gloomy ravines. Weeds, mingled with wild flowers, grew in profusion all along the banks, creeping round the trees and out of the crevices, and sometimes interlacing their leaves in such a manner as almost to prevent our farther progress. Still we ascended the haunted mountain; our horses leaping up the craggy sides, and crossing the narrow ledges that formed a natural bridge over many an unfathomable gulf, with as much speed and ease as if they were proceeding over a level sward.

The moon, which had hitherto clothed the surrounding scenery with the purest brilliancy, all at once became invisible. Thick heavy clouds shut out the planets from view, and all around and above us was enveloped in the blackest darkness. The wind came rushing down the mountain with a fierce and thrilling shout, and sharp flames of electric fluid flashed in a zigzag direction from the dark sky, occasionally giving us a momentary view of the dangers of our situation. Now we stood on the brink of a gaping fissure—a moment afterward we were climbing a perpendicular cliff—again we were leaping a roaring cataract—and at the next minute passing a frightful abyss. As the lightning flashed around, it seemed to disclose to us a multitude of fiendish faces and horrid forms; and as the thunder boomed with a sound as if it would crash the earth, we heard the most unearthly yells and screams. Shouts of laughter came from the air—groans of anguish rose from the ground. Every rock appeared instinct with life, and the very trees seemed to shriek as we passed by them. Yet, in the midst of this din and darkness, our noble steeds bore us proudly on—my companion whistled a lively air, and I felt so much excited by the fearful sublimity of the scene that I knew not the slightest sentiment

of fear. I experienced a sort of intoxication—a wild inexpressible delight. It was as if I had entered into a new existence. I patted the sleek neck of the fleet animal that carried me so well, and he acknowledged the caress by shaking his flowing mane, snorting loudly, till the rocks rung with its echoes, and increasing his speed till he appeared to fly. What a proud situation, I thought, was mine!—thus, in the depth of midnight, on a courser that outstripped the wind, to be borne triumphantly through perils, from which the weak souls of men would have shrunk dismayed! I gloried in my superiority. My unconsciousness of danger I enjoyed with a sensation of exalted pride. I thought I had shaken off all the fears that cling to dull humanity, and was assuming a more spiritual life. I fancied that I should soon become dead to all sense of pain, and as easily be enabled to triumph over all the weaknesses, the passions, the prejudices of mortality.

We halted. I beheld a scene,—a scene that the most extravagant imagination could never have conceived. We were upon the edge of the mountain, looking down upon a narrow glen completely surrounded by high, sharp-pointed rocks, shooting up to the skies in dark, frowning masses. The whole of this space seemed peopled by a multitude of forms, only to be distinguished by the innumerable torches that were flashing in every direction. We here left our horses, and descended the mountain. As we approached, the appearance of everything grew wilder and more unearthly. The forms, the features, the actions of the strange beings among whom we were venturing, became more apparent. Crowds of fantastic shapes were chasing each other over the sharp rocks, others were leaping over one another through the air, and all were engaged in some strange and ludicrous sport. Here might be seen two imps, each clinging to the points of two opposite rocks, with their tails knotted together, upon which a third was diligently amusing him by swinging backward and forward,—there we saw a whole string of them, holding by each other's hands and feet, stretched at full length right across the top of the glen; and while thus suspended, two of their companions were gayly dancing, as on a tight-rope, upon their prostrate bodies. Seated high on a small portion of granite, scarcely large enough for a bird's nest, which projected far over the

dark gulf below, a grave old demon was observed throwing into the air and catching several juvenile imps, as a juggler plays with balls. Farther on, upon a dangerous acclivity, two fierce-looking incubi were engaged in fencing with their own tails. In one place these creatures had managed, by putting their heads and feet together, and inserting each other's body through the circle so formed, to create a natural chain; and there they had fixed themselves on the precipitous sides of the mountain, where they hung in festoons. Another set, by hanging by each other's legs from one of the highest rocks, formed a ladder, up which others, bearing torches, were rapidly ascending. The highest spoke of these infernal steps was kept in its place by being held by the hands of a stout imp on the top of the rock, who was supported by several of his companions; each, to prevent being overbalanced, pulling with all his might at the tail of the imp before him. There was no end to the variety and whimsicality of these scenes.

Down below, a band of all sorts of strange instruments were performed upon by a set of beings quite as extraordinary. Here was a cat with a fish's head—there a monkey with the face of an owl—close by a gigantic toad—these were surrounded by a vast number of musicians equally monstrous in their appearance. The conductor was a baboon with the ears of an ass; he wore spectacles, and he flourished his baton, which was a sheep's marrow-bone, with a ludicrous affectation of dignity. Near these a numerous group of most voluptuous-looking women, clad after a fashion that only heightened their charms, were dancing with an equal number of ugly nondescripts, and appeared to enter into the spirit of the dance with as much zest as if their partners had been the handsomest and most agreeable race of beings. In many instances the heads of these women, if they might be so called, were fancifully arrayed in oriental shawls of bright colours, or with feathers of the peacock, or with conical crowns of glittering brass. All had their breasts bare, and wore their hair in long elfin curls. Some waltzed, spinning round and round at a tremendous speed; but the figures used by the greater number were the most fantastic and extraordinary that could possibly be imagined.

Not far from them a bearish-looking individual appeared

busily engaged in teaching a set of pig-faced characters the art of singing. The noise these vocalists created was unparalleled. It was the mingling of the bray of the jackass, the scream of the peacock, the laugh of the hyena, and the squall of the parrot. At a little distance were a large party of gamblers—some at cards, some at dice, some at one thing and some at another, pursuing their games with as much earnestness as if their lives depended on their success. In close approximation was a gang of thirsty revellers in a glorious state of inebriety. Farther on a troop of similar objects appeared enjoying the amusements of a masquerade. One bore a great resemblance to a fat bishop, another was disguised as a learned judge, and a third strutted about in the uniform of a field-marshal. Kings and queens were in abundance. Here a patriot held forth as the friend of the people, abusing taxes, governments, and laws, till having received a pension he became as warm in their defence. There an agitator poured forth a torrent of virtuous eloquence about the wrongs and oppressions endured by his poor countrymen, while, at the same time, he drained the half-starved peasantry of their last coin to feed his insatiable avarice. In one place a pious fanatic was thundering damnation to an audience who appeared fast asleep,—in another a demure puritan was preaching the merits of temperance to a circle of mulberry noses. A crowd of lawyers were expelling a brother practitioner from their society for having been found honest; and an assembly of doctors were fighting together, having disputed which had killed the greatest number of patients. Parties of travelling legislators, brawling divines, begging patriots, selfish philanthropists, superficial philosophers, experimental politicians, with quacks, imposters, and cheats of every kind, were to be seen diligently pursuing their several vocations.

“These,” said Mephistophiles, directing my attention to the various objects as we passed them, “are but the representatives of the vices and follies of human life. The world to which you have the honour of belonging is peculiarly rich in hypocrisy: it is always preaching morality, virtue, and religion; yet I will prove to you that these are but idealities, invented by human credulity. Like the dog in the fable, many a poor fool drops his bit of meat while grasping at the shadow he has himself created. These

good people you see here have assembled to hold a jubilee. I thought it would be a good opportunity for initiating you into the mysteries of the spiritual world. You will see much, and doubtless profit much by what you behold. Man never gives himself any trouble, or enters into any danger, unless he has hopes of gaining something for his pains. The charitable give to the poor on earth that it may be paid with interest in heaven. The expectation of gaining cent. per cent. is a great inducement to a liberal mind to give a penny to a poor man with eleven starving children. Those who make a parade of liberality are the greatest extortioners under the sun : they take care that it shall cost them nothing. Abroad they profess it, preach it, live by it ; and at home they grind their servants in their wages, and pinch their children in their diet : they live upon public credit, and always live much above their income. The miser is a much more respectable character : he saves not for his own use ; he starves himself as well as his cat. He dies, and a phoenix arises from his ashes. His heir is sure to be a prodigal. The money scraped together by useless accumulation, is sent flowing into a hundred different channels. The liberal dies, and his heir gains nothing but a stock of liberal opinions. These women you see are witches ; they are very useful : women can be very serviceable at times. You are surprised, perhaps, to see these witches young, and in such good condition ; but the truth is, they have the power of making themselves as seductive as they please ; and, as witches possess all the vanities of women, it cannot be wondered at that they should, on such occasions as the present, like to appear to the greatest advantage. The other beings might assume more prepossessing shapes if they chose ; but they are of the male sex, and man loves to be singular."

"Come," said I, impatiently, "let us have a sample of their art. I am anxious to acquire that knowledge for which I sought your assistance."

"Be not too impatient !" replied my companion ; "the knowledge you require may come when you have the least occasion for it. However, 'needs must when the devil drives ;' so follow me !"

I trod close upon his footsteps, through the crowds that opened to receive us. The women tried to entice me with lascivious looks, and the demons grinned at me as I passed.

"The woman you see there," said Mephistophiles, directing my attention to a witch whose fearful beauty was crowned with a wreath of poppies, "has this night become a bride. Her name is Spitfire: a very amiable being in her way. That respectable gentleman, with the head of a goat, who is playing at dice with the centaur, is her husband: he is called Hellhound, and has long done extensive business as a sorcerer. It is thought to be a highly advantageous match for both parties."

The bride approached. My companion desired me, if I wished to make trial of the witch's art, to state my request to her, as she was considered remarkably accomplished. I followed his advice.

"Sweet mistress!" said I, looking upon her flashing eyes and sensual smile, that threw a light upon her features, like the beauty of a Medusa, "I wish to profit by thy skill. Canst show me anything I have not seen, or tell me anything I do not know?"

She replied, taking my hand in hers—

"Slave of human fears! tell me,
What wouldst thou know—what wouldst thou see?"

At that moment I thought how much I should like to know what my fair cousin was about; and answered the witch's request, by stating my desire to see and learn the occupation of the person of whom I was thinking. She immediately annointed the palm of my hand with a portion of her own saliva, muttering at the same time—

"By the charm which long hath hung
Moistening the witch's tongue,
On thy open hand discern
All that thou dost wish to learn!"

I fixed my gaze where I was directed; and my surprise may be imagined, when I saw, as in a mirror placed in the palm of my hand, sitting in her own little chamber, by me quickly recognised, and evidently writing a letter—my amiable pupil. She was dressed in deep mourning. Her look was calm and sweet, and a smile seemed playing about her mouth. She seemed thinking of something which gave her the most intense gratification; yet a shade of sorrow

appeared to pass over her countenance as she continued her employment. Then she left off writing; then she smiled again; then she looked thoughtful: presently I observed tears falling down her blooming cheek; and, in a few seconds, these were succeeded by smiles of pleasure, that flung around her a blaze of pure and holy light. I felt curious to know what could cause in her such emotion, and wished to discover to whom she was writing. I bent down in anxious scrutiny, and, as I read the word "Dear ——" the vision vanished. Disappointed and vexed, I turned to ask the witch to renew the spell, when I found she had left me to mingle in the distant throng. I looked again on the hand, but could see nothing but the warm skin and an infinite number of lines, bending in various directions across the open palm.

"You look as if you had been bewitched," said Mephistophiles laughing; "but remember, to your consolation, that you are not the first man who has been thus used by a woman. But see!" he exclaimed, directing my attention to a copper-faced individual, who became very conspicuous among the crowd; "yonder hot-looking gentleman, who seems as grave as a lord chancellor, is a personage of some importance here: he is no other than the great Zamiel, of whom, doubtless, you have heard much from your German associates. He is here a sort of master of the ceremonies, and is looked upon by the juveniles as a kind of 'usher of the black rod.' Being rather morose in his temper, he is more feared than admired. But, perhaps, he follows the example of great men upon earth, who are, with very few exceptions, great bears. Your Dr. Parr was a savage; Dean Swift was a beast; and Dr. Johnson a mixture of them both. As for your scholars of antiquity, they were a strange set—one half fools, and the rest madmen."

We proceeded on till we came to a group in one corner, who, with extravagant gestures and wild incantations, were dancing round a blazing fire. Occasionally one would cast something into the burning heap; then the flame would shoot up into the skies, illuminating all around with a wild and fearful light, and showing the grotesque forms and monstrous faces that moved about. I heard, as I approached, the following words, chanted in a strange unearthly melody:—

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

In the deep midnight,
 While the torch burns bright,
 And the toad from her secret hole creeps wearily,
 Here a spell we raise,
 As we feed the blaze,
 And troop in our magic circle cheerily.

CHORUS OF SORCERERS.

Spirit of flame,
 Thy aid we claim !
 Monarch of dread to our prayer be hearkening ;
 There's a deed to be done,
 There's a soul to be won,
 There's a light burning on which requires thy darkening.

CHORUS OF IMPS.

Destroyer ! devourer ! misanthropist ! fiend !
 Art thou strangling the infant that dieth unweaned ?
 Art thou scorching the earth through its valleys and springs,
 As thou speedest along on the comet's red wings ?
 Art thou riding the earthquake or driving the blast ?
 In the breath of the pestilence where hast thou passed ?

CHORUS OF ALL.

By the hate we all cherish
 For him and his wrath ;
 By the victims that perish
 Each day in thy path ;
 By guilty ambition,
 Man's passions and pride ;
 By the certain perdition
 The world must abide !
 By the crimes that are crowding
 Earth's mansions and graves ;
 By the darkness now shrouding
 Thy servants and slaves ;
 By the power which dwelleth
 In fire and in flood ;
 By the magic that swelleth
 Each drop of our blood ;
 By the charm to us given—
 Thy name's dreaded spell,
 Which is whispered in heaven,
 And shouted in hell—
 We call thee ! we seek thee ! we want thee !—appear !
 Where art thou ? where dwellest thou ? Monarch of Fear ?

Mephistophiles shouted, with a voice that seemed to pierce through stone and cloud, "HERE!" The word was caught up by a thousand echoes. Rock answered rock, and hill to hill repeated the sound. "Here!" was screamed from the precipice, and shouted from the torrent: it howled in the thunder, and shrieked in the blast; it was muttered in the deep ravine and murmured in the distant valley. For some minutes nothing seemed breathing in earth or heaven but "HERE! Here! Here!" At the same instant the music ceased; the revels stopped; the dance concluded; all the wild misshapen objects, who had previously been sporting about the glen, came crowding tumultuously round Mephistophiles, and with extravagant gestures of adoration and fear flung themselves at his feet, while, in a strange measure, they chanted the following stanzas:—

"Hail! hail! hail!
 We dark spirits, fierce and frail,
 At thy feet our bodies fling,
 In homage to our chief and king.
 Hail! dread lord of the burning couch!
 See thy slaves beside thee crouch!
 We worship thy power—to thy mandate we bow;
 We tremble beneath the hot flash on thy brow.
 Thou bringest a mortal: what spells shall we call?
 For we know by thy gaze thou hast work for us all."

Mephistophiles answered them:—

"I come, oh slaves, to the shadowy glen,
 From busy toil in the haunts of men;
 And with me comes a daring mortal,
 Whose soul would pass our magic portal:
 For deep within his breast is nursed
 A yearning wish—a burning thirst—
 To know the secret things that lie
 Hid from every human eye.
 Prepare with all your cunning craft
 The mighty spell—the charmed draught,
 Which from his soul earth's bonds shall sever,
 And set his spirit free for ever!"

As soon as Mephistophiles had done speaking, the demoniac crew came dancing and yelling round me, and expressed their joy in metrical language similar to these lines:—

"Another! another!

He hath brought to us a brother!
Round and round encircle him,
Till heart feel sick and eye grow dim.
Thou art welcome to our law
As human flesh to tiger's jaw;
As the sunshine to the shepherd,
As the sheep is to the leopard.
Thou shalt know what none have known,
What none have seen behold alone:
What the shadowy mountain covers,
What within the night-cloud hovers;
Low beneath the ocean deeps
View the revels nature keeps;
Soar on lightning-pinion'd cars,
High above the burning stars;
Use the power the living dread;
Learn the secrets of the dead.

Shouldst thou wish to fly in the eagle's track,
Or sail round the world on the kraken's back;
Or down in the caverns of earth descend,
Where the bones of the mammoth for miles extend,
With the skulls of dead monsters who've filled those sites
Since the days of the old pre-Adamites;
Or, leaving the dreaming world behind,
Take a flight through the air to the home of the wind:
Hast thou beauty to win—hast thou glory to gain—
Any wish of thy heart—any dream of thy brain?
When thou ownest our power, when life's hopes thou canst shun,
Ere the thought can be uttered, thy will shall be done!"

The most influential of the witches and sorcerers, headed by Spitfire and Hellhound, now formed themselves into a circle round the fire they had lately quitted, and, placing on it what seemed the huge skull of some antediluvian reptile, they commenced their incantation, throwing in the ingredients as they named them, and occasionally stirring up the mixture with the ends of long shrivelled boughs of some blasted tree, which many of them held in their hands.

"Now with care the spell begin;
To the fire throw fuel in.
First we fling, to raise the flame,
Blood of babe destroyed in shame;
Sweat-drops from a hangman's rope,
That on a murd'rer's neck had laid,
Tongue that raised, then banish'd hope,
And tears from one such tongue betray'd.

Brain of hopeless suicide,
 Heart of damned parricide ;
 Weed that witch alone can pull,
 Growing on a dead man's skull ;
 Wart pluck'd from a maiden's skin,
 Ere she knew a dream of sin ;
 Root of hemlock killed by blight ;
 Juice of deadly aconite ;
 Pus from wounds of fatal pangs ;
 Poison drawn from serpents' fangs ;
 Nipple from the wanton's breast ;
 Lips the libertine possess'd ;
 Fat that lined a glutton's thigh ;
 Drunkard's windpipe, hard and dry ;
 Nails from corpse in coffin growing ;
 Gum from ruthless eyelids flowing ;
 Carrion from a vulture's beak ;
 Hypocrite's unblushing cheek ;
 Earth plucked from a new-made grave ;
 Bones that rotted 'neath the wave ;
 Eye of lizard ; tooth of asp ;
 Spawn of toad ; and sting of wasp.
 Round and round these matters stir,
 In the name of Lucifer ;
 Trooping on, with mystic sign,
 Three times three, and nine times nine.
 Then within the mixture fling
 Feathers from a raven's wing ;
 Moss that sprang from dews and rains
 On assassins hanged in chains ;
 Blossoms from the nightshade blown
 When the stars to rest had flown ;
 Berries guiltless hands should cull
 When the moon is at the full ;
 Fungi grown where guilt hath bled ;
 Worms that in corruption bred ;
 Tiger's claws and petrel's tail ;
 Adder's skin and scorpion's scale ;
 Slime from pestilential bog ;
 Foam from off a rabid dog ;
 Fragments of the upas bark ;
 Jaw of wolf, and fin of shark ;
 Then, one by one, each pluck with care
 From elfin lock a single hair :
 These will soon unite the spell—
 Throw them in, and stir them well.
 Now, snatched from the earth-worm's feast,
 Fling hand of an apostate priest.
 Again the mystic troop renew,
 With piercing shriek and wild halloo,

As each to each makes secret sign,
 Three times three, and nine times nine.
 By the curse that gold doth bind
 On the souls of humankind ;
 By the lies that wealth invents
 To blazon rich men's monuments ;
 By the wasting agony
 Borne by starving poverty ;
 By the torture and the wrong
 The weak have suffered from the strong ;
 By passions proud, and feelings carnal,
 That haunt the cloister and the charnel ;
 By man's repeated blasphemies,
 And his unnumbered perjuries ;
 By the power of shame and guilt,
 Of pain uncured, of blood fresh spilt ;
 By those dread diseases man
 Hath endured since crime began ;
 By wild ambition, wilder glory,
 The lover's hope, the gossip's story ;
 By the hot tornado's breath,
 The strength of sin, the might of death ;
 By the power whose secret force
 Stops the torrent in its course,
 Sends the storm-blast on its way,
 Gives the crocodile its prey,
 Makes war's fierce flame break out afresh,
 And sheathes the dagger in the flesh ;
 By the voices in the wind,
 Shouting to the frighten'd hind—
 The piercing howl, the thrilling scream,
 From forest deep or haunted stream ;
 By the darkness of the tomb ;
 By the ravine's fearful gloom ;
 By those rude strifes that through earth thrill ;
 By all things that are killed or kill ;
 By all that breathes of us or ours,—
 Charm, receive thy magic powers !
 Once again we make the sign,
 Three times three, and nine times nine.
 Behold ! it swells ! the web is spun !
 The charm's complete—the spell is done ?"

From out of the boiling vessel Zamiel, the arch-fiend,
 poured into a mystically shaped vial some of the liquid
 thus created ; and, as he gave it into my hands, with a
 smile like the glare of blazing wood upon the brow of a fe-
 rocious maniac, witches, sorcerers, and imps again gathered
 round me, dancing with strange gestures of delight, and
 screaming the following chorus :—

"Here's the spell thou wouldst acquire,
 Nursed in flame and fed with fire ;
 Made within the dark abyss,
 Where restless spirits foam and hiss ;
 Imprisoned in the yawning chasm,
 Asunder rent by deadly spasm ;
 'Tis the magic draught we brew—
 Draught that shall all things subdue :
 A charm as fierce to youth and age
 As the tigress in her rage.
 When the sun's burnt out, and the planets tumble,
 The sea shrinks up, and all earth shall crumble,
 This spell shall have life and strength to act,
 With the force of the mountain cataract !
 It shall stir in heart and brain,
 Through the bone and through the vein ;
 Giving thee, for ill or good,
 Power o'er flame, and rule o'er flood :
 All things secret making known,
 Making all the world thine own ;
 Giving thee a spirit bold,
 Firm as iron, strong as gold ;
 Thrusting fears of life aside,
 Opening gate of knowledge wide :
 Favour'd mortal ! wouldst thou drink,
 Thou shalt act, and thou shalt think,
 Thou shalt see, and thou shalt learn,
 Things no eyes but thine discern ;
 Drink the draught, and from that hour
 Thou shalt feel a spirit's power !
 Wouldst thou study nature's lore ?
 Take the key and ope the door !"

Of what followed after this I have but a confused recollection. I remember waking in the morning in my own chamber, while the sun was streaming in at the window, and observing Mephistophiles quietly smoking a pipe of cnaster in the armchair. The remembrance of the scenes in which I had been engaged in the preceding night, came across my mind like a fearful vision. I could remember something of an oath I had taken, so horrid that the recollection of it seemed to curdle the marrow in my bones—of a bond that I had signed with my blood, pricked from my vein by a witch's needle, the thought of which made Heaven look black upon me—of blasphemies I had uttered, so terrific, that the fires of hell seemed gaping for my soul—of screams of joy, of shrieks of triumph, and of forms and faces so demoniac, that

they could only have belonged to the legends of the damned. I awoke in fright—my eyes starting from their sockets, my hair standing on end, and my heart trembling in my breast like the last leaf on a forest-tree. But it was a momentary fear—the death-struggle of conscience—the mere whisper of remorse. I drove this weakness off with the aid of ambition and pride. I thought of the power I had gained, the knowledge I had acquired, the field that lay open to my investigation, and I rose with the determination of immediately exercising the fatal influence I had so dearly obtained.

The first thing that met my sight, was the bottle given me at the witches' jubilee. I hastily snatched it up, with the purpose of drinking the magic draught that was to open for me the gates of knowledge, and realize all my ambitious hopes.

"Not yet, master!" exclaimed Mephistophiles, starting from his seat. "As the wise Solomon said, there is a time for everything. Keep that charmed mixture till the proper moment arrives for its use. You will need it by-and-by. You have no occasion for it now."

I put it in a place of security.

CHAPTER V.

I put my newly-acquired powers into operation.—I am beloved by the most beautiful girl in the neighbourhood.—Effect of jealousy, envy, and neglect.—I receive a letter from Dora, giving me very important intelligence.—Melancholy termination of the affection of Francisca, and my imprisonment on the charge of murdering her father.—Mephistophiles appears to me in a new shape, and by his assistance I escape from custody.—We proceed together to England; Mephistophiles as a German prince, and I as Lord Melcombe's heir.

"MASTER, dear!" exclaimed Mephistophiles, putting down his meerschaum, "hast thou no work for thy servant? Remember that idleness is a rust that eats into the heart, and destroys that polish which the friction of continual action gives to the metal of which human nature is composed."

"I want thee, slave!" replied I, in a tone of command.

"What wouldst thou have, mightier prince than czar or Cæsar?" he asked, with an affectation of profound humility, as he advanced towards me. "I wait to do thy bidding."

"Knowest thou Francisca," said I, "the only daughter of old Mahlgeld, the honest miller on the Rauschenwasser?"

"Know I the prettiest mädchen in all the country round!" replied my companion. "It would be strange, indeed, were so pleasing a face unknown to me. No! a village belle is as careful as a petty prince of making her power known and felt within the territory she rules. But hast thou cast thine eyes there, sublimest of philosophers? Oh! men are always children. Their chief amusement is drawn from toys."

"I want not thy taunts, I demand thy assistance!" I said, with a proud consciousness of my own power. "I love the girl; and wish to have her. Canst thou assist me?"

"I can, and will, my noble master!" he replied with an air of humble deference. "Thy wish is already near its accomplishment. Go to her: she will be as tractable as thou canst desire."

This girl I had long admired and wished to possess. Her beauty was the general admiration of the students, yet she exhibited no partiality for any one of them. The attentions and the presents she received, she took as homage to her charms. Her lovers were numerous, and she smiled on them all. Each thought himself the only favoured one, each grew extravagant in his devotion, and each got laughed at in turn. She had a pair of eyes that were bright, piercing, and delicate; and her mouth was the rosiest blossom that ever the sun shone upon. Wonderful was the quantity of verses written in her praise, and numerous were the duels fought in her honour: it was a duel that first led me to look upon her with eyes of love.

Her father's garden was the resort of many of the young men of the university, partly in consequence of the attractions of his daughter, and as well because it was a convenient place for skittle-playing, smoking, drinking coffee and schnaps, duelling, and other amusements of the bürschen. The large saloon in the house was a favourite place for the duellists, and many important battles of the members of one landesmanschip against

those of another had been fought in that room. It so happened that seven or eight students, all suitors to the fair Francisca, after having partaken too liberally of Kirschenwasser and Vanilla, became unpleasantly rude to the object of their idolatry; and I, observing the very great annoyance to which they subjected her, interfered and liberated her from their unwelcome persecutions, but not before I received a smile of thanks that well repaid me for my labour. The consequence was, that I was challenged by the whole party.

A duel among the Gottingen students is a very different thing from hostile meetings in England. With the precautions taken, though wounds may be inflicted, no fatal consequences can ensue. In the case in which I was engaged, it was settled by the seconds that we should fight with the *schläger*, a thin, sharp-bladed weapon, with a steel basket-hilt: each set of combatants to fight twelve rounds with *anschnitt*, (that is, till a wound was inflicted of a sufficient length to cause blood to flow,) wearing a hat and bandages to protect the head, arms, and vital parts. The day appointed, which happened to be the following Sunday, having arrived, (that day being almost exclusively devoted to such proceedings, as there is no attendance upon lectures,) and the surgeon being in waiting, I was prepared for the approaching combat by my own second. After my coat, waistcoat, and cravat had been taken off, my shirt sleeve of the sword-arm was rolled up, and a bandage of silk, well stuffed, reaching from the wrist to the elbow, was there secured. Five or six silk handkerchiefs were fastened round my throat, and another, containing a piece of stiff buckram, bound over these. The legs and stomach were then protected by leather breeches, stuffed with horse-hair; and round my waist I wore a belt of stiff pasteboard, also well lined with horse-hair. With a strong, broad-brimmed hat upon my head, and a well-chalked glove upon my hand, I was completely equipped. Two parallel lines having been drawn with chalk at the distance of about twelve feet, from within which the combatants are not allowed to move while fighting, and the weapon having been placed in my hand, the first of my antagonists was ushered in with his second; and, having taken up our proper position, with our seconds similarly padded, and armed with a blunt *schläger* each, to knock up

our swords at the end of every round—with a witness to assist and advise each of us during the fight, and to hold our weapons after every round—and with an umpire to see that the proceedings were fair—at the command “Auf die mensur!” my adversary and myself placed each his left foot upon the measured line. At the words “Bindet die klingen!” we crossed our swords, and the seconds crossed their blades above and below ours. One second then testified that the blades were bound, by saying, “Gebunden sind!” and as the other cried “Los!” the blunt schlägers were withdrawn, and we commenced lunging and slashing at each other with all our skill.

I had from my youth been a tolerable proficient in the mysteries of swordsmanship, and since my residence at the university I had been a frequent attendant at the fencing-school; consequently I was not unskilled in the use of the weapon. My antagonist, who was a slim, active youth, was as good a swordsman as myself, and the twelve rounds were fought out without either party receiving a wound. Most of the others, however, ended differently. I received three wounds on the breast; one of my opponents got a cut in the face that laid his cheek open; and very few of the others escaped without some severe gashes. The lookers on, who smoked their pipes without the least concern for the combatants, were very well pleased with my behaviour on this occasion, and cheered me with repeated bravoës.

The fair Francisca, the innocent cause of all this bloodshed, regarded me from that time as her champion. Her father became aware of my share in these transactions, and he was ever afterward most eloquent of his good opinion. Old Mahlgeld had for many years been a soldier: many a pleasant song could he sing, and, when he pleased, could show as merry a heart as the youngest. My attentions to the lovely Francisca became now very constant. Often have we met at the Marien Spring; and many an hour have we danced on the Tanzboden. She has been my companion in the stroll, and my partner in the waltz. I fancied that I had made a favourable impression, and felt the gratification which most young men feel in believing themselves the object of preference by a girl universally admired. What, then, I intended I could hardly account to myself. I felt that I loved her; but I never considered what effect the indulgence

of my passion could produce on the charming being that had created it. With the natural selfishness of man, I thought only of my own enjoyment. I addressed her with the language of affection, and she received me not disdainfully; but she denied me the privilege of a lover, and refused me the slightest favour. Opposition only fanned the flame which her eyes had lighted up in my breast. I pursued her with entreaties; and she had hitherto listened, yet denied.

I found her in the summerhouse; her favourite resort. It was a place that owed all its attractions to her own decorative genius; an arbour formed of twisting vines, from round which clusters of the purple grape hung in rich festoons. It breathed of sweet odours. Inside, in little boxes and ornamented baskets, grew all sorts of beautiful blossoms. These flowers were her children—her friends: they witnessed her tears; they enjoyed her smiles; and they seemed to flourish in her happiness. And there was a seat, formed of the twisted branches of some dead tree. Here she would sit, and bring her work, her book, or her music; for honest Mahlgeld thought he could not use his money to better advantage than by bestowing on his daughter such accomplishments as might give him pleasure in his old age to see exercised. She was the presiding deity of this floral temple—the Aphrodite of the bower: the very birds seemed to think that there was something sacred about the place and its mistress; for they built their nests with the greatest confidence among the thick leaves of the arbour. I found her as if lost in a deep revery. Her eyes were half concealed in their lids; for she cast them down upon the ground as if reading something in the earth. But what she beheld was not there. Her arms were drooping negligently in her lap; and in one hand she held an open book, which she had been attempting to read. I approached her, but she did not perceive me. I spoke to her, but she heard me not. I took her hand in mine. In alarm, she raised her eyes; but when they met mine, gazing passionately upon her, they became eloquent with pleasure and tenderness.

“Dear Vincent!” said she, while the tones of her sweet voice were tremulous with emotion, “art thou here? How strange that I should have been thinking of thee!”

“I had never observed so much affection in her manner. It was the first time she had called me “dear;” nor had I

before been addressed by her with the fond familiar "thou;" and I wondered at the change which had transformed the sprightly coquettish Francisca into the endearing, the enamoured being I now beheld.

"Fränzchen," I replied affectionately, "it is I: and where should I be, but near thee? Do I not love thee most devotedly? Art thou not the very spirit of my existence?—my heart and soul? And where can I find happiness but in thy presence?"

"So I dost truly love me?" she asked with anxious emphasis, as her fond eyes, melting with tenderness, were raised to mine.

"As the flowers love the sunshine," said I passionately; "as the bees the sweet blossoms; and as nature loveth all things beautiful."

"And wilt thou ever remain so?" she again asked, while the fluttering of her young heart betrayed the delight my acknowledgment was creating.

"My affection is like the mountain: it can never be shaken," I replied; "time hath no power over it; death cannot destroy it; and the world shall never cause its removal. A flower nourished by thy looks, and fostered by thy smiles, hath now taken such deep root in my breast, that the storms of life shall not be able to tear a leaf from its stem. Let it, then, bask in those glowing beams; let it breathe that sweet breath that is its atmosphere: warm it with thy sunniest glances, and strengthen it with thy fondest caresses; then its blossoms shall put forth their unfading braveries for thy exclusive enjoyment; and its leaves wreath a deathless garland to thy immortal honour!" As I spoke I became more impassioned; and my face, as I stooped over her, gradually approached her own. Her gaze, directed upward to mine, seemed a concentration of rapture; and the soft blush on her cheek became, every instant, tinged with a richer and warmer crimson. She appeared desirous of expressing her delight; but, as if no language could interpret her emotions, she suddenly threw her arms around my neck, drew my mouth towards her own, and then imprinted a prolonged, warm, and delicious caress. Then, as if ashamed of her weakness, she immediately drooped her head on my shoulder, and wept.

Many times since then has that bower been the scene of

our mutual affection. It has heard our rapturous caresses ; it has witnessed our passionate enjoyments ; but our first fond kiss was never forgotten, never excelled. Francisca certainly loved me with a woman's ardour, living only in the present, and entirely reckless of the future. Nor did I return her affection with less devotion. From being her admirer I became her worshipper, her slave. I remember once, when we were together in this delightful bower, she entreated me to sing to her, and I took up her guitar, one that she prized because it was my gift, and sang the following little ballad :—

" The nightingale came to my lady's sweet bower,
Where grew ev'ry blossom, and bloom'd ev'ry flower ;
And while the night-breezes their treasures would weep,
He sang all those bright floral beauties asleep.

But the roses soon faded, the hyacinth fled,
And each delicate lily low droop'd its fair head ;
The winds of the north tore the buds from their stems,
And the nightingale sought after other bright gems.

Then said I to my Gertraut,—' Sweet maiden, behold !
By that bird and those flowers are our destinies told ;'
But she smiling said,—' Thou, like the song-bird may fly,
Yet the love which now blooms in my heart ne'er can die !' "

" Ah !" exclaimed Francisca, with feminine enthusiasm, when I had finished the song, " she loved as I do : and what a happiness it is thus to love ! The world hath nothing like it. Before I knew thee I loved many things—my father, my father's friends ; the flowers, the birds, the stars ; but the love I felt for all these does not make up one half the love I feel for thee ! Why I love thee, I know : thou art noble, generous, brave, and handsome—so wise, so good, and so gentle :—but why thou shouldst love me I cannot tell. I am but a simple country girl, of humble birth, and of rude manners. Yet thou hast told me often how very fond of me thou art. Thou wouldst not deceive me, I am certain ; for if I thought thou couldst, now that I have proved how much in heart and soul I am thine, I could not live. I would rather a sword were buried in my bosom—I would rather die a thousand deaths, than lose thy love : oh ! it is so precious to me !"

In such language would she express her devotion. But my spirit was restless ; it was yearning after new pleasures. The affection of this beautiful girl no longer gave me the rapture it at first bestowed, and in a new face I sought a fresh victim. Florenz, the belle of the neighbouring village of Mengerhausen, had long been the rival of Francisca : but there was as much difference in their natures as in their beauty. The former was proud and envious ; the latter gentle and affectionate. Florenz had for some time been trying to gain me from her rival, of whom she never missed an opportunity of speaking ill. I, at first, paid no attention to her overtures ; but she left no art untried to lessen my admiration of Francisca, and to attract it towards herself. As her person and features were seductive, and she knew how to set off her beauty to the greatest advantage, I in time began to admire her ; paid her considerable attention ; and, at last, gained from her an avowal of her attachment. Francisca grew uneasy at my neglect ; but though I visited her less frequently, she never upbraided me with a sigh, or reproached me with a tear. While I remained with her, she was all smiles, and kindness, and cheerfulness. When I left her, she wandered about in melancholy misery, away from her father, her companions ; and her friends. Her flowers were neglected, her work untouched. Yet she still clung to my love, as the drowning seaman catches at a weed. It was her hope and her salvation. Her reliance on my sincerity, however, was doomed to be destroyed. A gay party had met at the Murien Spring, and among the dancers were Florenz and Francisca. The former used every endeavour to detain me at her side. She was dressed in all the pride of village finery, much of which I had bestowed upon her ; and, pleased with her appearance, I waltzed with her nearly the whole of the evening. In going to procure her some refreshment, I came suddenly upon Francisca, who was sitting apart from the dancers. As I met her gaze, I observed a tear trickling down her pale cheek, that but too plainly expressed the unutterable anguish I had inflicted ; and while my heart smote me for my cruelty, I hastened towards her, to erase by kindness the pangs I had caused.

“ Vincent, it is too late ! ” said she, calmly. “ I see your intention ; but it is now useless. You have dragged from me my last hope, and left me nothing—but to die. ” It is in

vain to say a word. You have plucked the veil from my eyes, and shown me how weak, how vain, how wicked I have been. I have been much to blame: but indeed I could not help loving you. I bear a living weight upon my heart, which I would conceal from the world's unpitying eyes. Let not my shame be known to my companions; but, above all, keep it secret from my father: it would crush the old man beneath the burden of his disgrace, and he would die cursing me. Do not attempt to follow me; I am going home. Oh! Vincent!" she exclaimed, as she left me, and the tears came gushing into her eyes, "I forgive you all the agony I have suffered. Heaven bless you and make you happy!"

I felt stunned and stupified by the manner in which she expressed these sentiments. No reproaching, no upbraiding; no, not even a word of blame to me! I who had so wronged her! All was sweetness, gentleness, and forgiveness: yet that very mildness produced more effect upon me than all the censures she could have uttered. I hastened after her, to declare my contrition, and to ask her forgiveness. She was not among the assembly. During my search Florenz came, arrayed with all her fascinations, towards me, and took my arm. I flung her from me as if she had been a loathsome reptile. She had thoroughly disgusted me. I thought of nothing but Francisca—cared for nothing but her. But Francisca was nowhere to be found: not in her father's house—not in the village—nor in the garden. That evening I returned to my lodging in a state of phrensy almost amounting to madness. The sarcasms of Mephistophiles were not likely to put me in a happier state of mind. I became furious, and commanded him to find her and to restore her to me.

"That will I do, my noble master!" exclaimed he, "in as brief a time as will suffice. But here are two letters from England, which, if I mistake not, contain matters in which you are deeply interested. I think, before we proceed on a search after the fair fugitive, it would be as well if you would make yourself acquainted with the contents of these epistles. Probably they may assist us to find the wanderer. Nay, look not so incredulous, good master! we read in holy books of greater improbabilities coming to pass."

I hastily tore open the first letter: it was from a fellow

Etonian, a gay captain in the guards, and read as follows:—

“United Service Club.

“MY DEAR VINCENT,

“There is nothing I hate so much as writing a letter—if even to a pretty woman; for one is obliged to invent to such a degree, that it becomes quite a task: but I promised to let you know all matters of moment going on here, so I sit down to my work as soberly as a president of a temperance society would make a speech against drunkenness. I certainly ought not to be in a humour to be facetious, for every thing seems going wrong with me. I got regularly dished at Doncaster, and with such a capital ‘book,’ too! Last week I lost five hundred at Crocky’s to the Marquis of Clevercard. I’ve been obliged to send my grays to Tattersall’s. Pauline, to whom I have been extravagantly liberal, has left me for that simpering simpleton, Sugarlips, the banker’s son whom you so soundly threshed at Eton. Devilish good fight that! I am completely cleaned out. And my tradesmen, too, are buzzing about me like wasps in an empty treacle-barrel. Nugee, having measured me so frequently, is now ‘going to take measures’ to compel me, &c. Hoby allows me ‘to vex heaven with my boot-less cries;’ and a crowd of hatters, hosiers, linendrapers, jewellers, and other respectable pickpockets, begin to insinuate, in the mildest manner possible, the necessity of their making me acquainted with that old Blue Beard, Law. Cursed shame, isn’t it? The old gentleman has grown rusty for some time, and has flatly refused to encourage what he is pleased to call my extravagance by paying my debts, he having already done me that trifling favour some half dozen times—amounting altogether only to the beggarly sum of twenty thousand pounds. But fathers have flinty hearts!

“What I shall do I don’t know. Banco Regis is not at all to my taste. I would sooner live under the water than over it. I suppose I must sell out, and take a trip to the Continent. I’m determined not to go to that refuge of the destitute, Boulogne: Paris is the place. Now, if those rascally Whigs hadn’t passed the Reform Bill, I could have got into Parliament for a snug borough, and set my dunning extortioners at defiance. I hate the Whigs. No wars, no

revolutions, no nothing. It's a shame that nations should remain so long at peace, and keep 'us youth' from reaping the honours and emoluments a glorious war is sure to bestow upon the deserving. I think I'll marry. It's the forlorn hope. An heiress is pleasant to think about; but a wife's the devil in any shape. Besides, these heiresses are always such dowdies. Flat noses, wide mouths, thick ankles, freckled skins, and red hair. No joke that. What sort of women are your Germans? If one may believe Rubens, they are something between a Hottentot Venus and a Flanders mare. Rare beauties, eh! But 'Nil desperandum' is my motto. As long as I can hear Pasta, and see Taglioni, I shall keep my philosophy; but should I be forced to give up my '*stall*,' the world would become a vacuum. For what the devil is there in it when these are taken away?

"How get you on at Göttingen? What a pity it is, though, a fine spirited fellow like you should keep poring over stupid books in an out of the way German university, when he might be enjoying all the gayeties of life here in London. But I suppose that will soon end now? You have, doubtless, arrived at years of discretion, and must think of entering the world? Come to me, my dear fellow! I will initiate you into all the secrets of a man about town. I have learned everything that is worth knowing; and, as experience is said to make a certain class of people wise, I think, without creating a suspicion of vanity, I may lay claim to a considerable share of wisdom. Let me be your guide through the flowery labyrinth of fashion; for it is only under the auspices of a worshipper that you can gain admittance to the temple.

"There is very little news stirring here at present; a few trifling matters of scandal are all that is interesting. I suppose you heard that Sir Mark Brainwell, who, if you remember, was your fag, shot himself, after having lost all his property at the salons in Paris. Poor Mark! But, talking of shooting, I had a match with Count Mustache, at Battersea, to kill most birds out of twenty. I killed fifteen running, lost the next, and killed all the others. The count missed the fifth and the tenth bird; consequently I won. Lady Beauregard did not appear satisfied with my success; but this did not surprise or offend me. What do you think

of old Lord Duddle leading to the hymeneal altar, as the newspapers say, the youngest of the seven Misses Single, leaving her tall slim sisters to enjoy the certain honours of celibacy. What a miserable dotard ! But I prophesy she will show him some sport ; for the girl is somewhat lively, particularly vain, and, as I have heard, has long carried on a *liaison* with a handsome cousin of hers in the Tenth. Who would have thought that the stately Duchess of Bradford would have been caught tripping ! yet such is the fact ; and her drawing-master, a protégé of his grace's, was the happy youth. However, the matter has been hushed up, the lessons discontinued, and the artist sent to teach elsewhere.

"The intrigue which has created the greatest sensation is that in which your amiable aunt, Lady Honoria, has obtained an immortal reputation. Since the Tories left office, Lord Melcombe has resided abroad, with his lady and child, the youthful lord : but her ladyship's morals were never very impregnable ; and a residence at Naples destroyed the little defence with which her pride and ambition had surrounded them. Many suspicious circumstances occurred that made your uncle uneasy ; but when Lady Honoria was spoken to on the subject, she was most indignantly virtuous ; declared that she would possess a *cavalier sergente*, as other women did ; refused to give up the society of her friend Prince Pozzo di Napoli, and threatened and abused her quiet husband for daring to suspect her impenetrable virtue. Matters went on a little longer in this way, till one morning her ladyship was discovered—no, she was not discovered ; she had disappeared, taking with her all her jewellery, and whatever money she could lay hold of ; and the prince had disappeared also. There could now be no doubt that a breach of one of the commandments had taken place between the platonists ; so your uncle packed up, started for England, and is at present suing for a divorce. The child has since died. It was always, I have heard, of a sickly constitution, which is attributed to the negligence of the mother. By the death of your young cousin, you are heir to the Melcombe peerage.

"There is a strange rumour prevailing, that his lordship had a daughter by his first wife, whom since his second marriage he had never seen. Report says that her father has

discovered her, has found her exceedingly accomplished and beautiful, and is endeavouring, by excessive attention, to make up for previous neglect. The oddest part of this strange affair is, that the young lady is stated to have entirely lost the faculty of speech, in consequence of some severe illness. A dumb beauty! Why, what a treasure of a wife she would make! She will be an heiress, too, no doubt. Nothing is talked of here but her extraordinary charms, her inestimable virtues, and her surprising accomplishments. Brambleberry has given her the title of 'La Belle Muette;' and young Sevenoaks, with whom I have lately been hunting at Melton, says that it must be a matter of great congratulation, to any one who is aspiring to her hand, to be aware that, when he pops the question, she cannot say no. Very good for him! When she comes out, I expect she will be regularly besieged. I do not know but that I shall be in that corps; for, really, if anything could induce me into matrimony, it would be the certainty of being free from curtain lectures, reproaches, abuse, and other small shot, so frequently directed from the battery of a wife's tongue upon her unfortunate better half. Have you ever heard of this attractive piece of silence? Whether or not, I should strongly advise you to come here with as little delay as possible.

"Accept my congratulations.

"A ce soir—Vale.

"FREDERICK FITZ-GREY."

"P. S. It is said that your aunt, the Marchioness of Brambleberry, intends patronising your amiable cousin: (a woman must be amiable that holds her tongue upon all occasions.) Her ladyship will make her the lion of the season; and Belgrave-square will be as noisy as a party of recruits before they have been drilled. Groby's married! The poor fellow was so cut up by the repulse he met with from that pretty little coquette, Clara Freelove, that he started from town to tell his griefs to his paternal oaks; and, on a visit to one of his tenants, the farmer's daughter, a sprightly girl, made him swallow syllabubs till he was so blind drunk that he would have made love to a cart-wheel. He grew furiously enamoured; she amazingly modest. He became unmanageable. Father and mother popped in by the merest

accident in the world: Groby looked foolish; his Chloe fainted away; papa and mamma seemed diabolical, and, in a week, the young lord of the manor married his tenant's daughter. He is now cultivating mangelwurzel, and his wife is teaching him the principles of good *husband-ry*."

Observing that the other letter was in Dora's handwriting, I broke open the seal without a moment's hesitation. It commenced—

"Melcombe House.

"MY DEAR COUSIN,

"It is so long since you wrote, that I am fearful some accident has occurred which has deprived me of the enjoyment of hearing from you. You cannot imagine the intense delight I experience while perusing your handwriting. No! you do not think I take so much pleasure in your letters, or you would write more frequently. Indeed, while I peruse the characters that you have drawn upon the paper, I cannot help considering them a part of yourself. Each letter is to me your representative—your ambassador. It speaks to me your wishes, and it expresses your opinions. Why, then, should I be deprived of such welcome messengers? I know that all your hours are devoted to enriching your noble mind with the treasures of philosophy and learning, and I love you too well to desire you to waste them upon me; but, dear Vincent, a few minutes are all I ask: a couple of lines will always satisfy me, as long as they tell me you are well and happy. Do I ask too much? There is little fear that I should forget you were I never to hear from you again; (though I anxiously and earnestly hope you will soon be able to indulge me with a few words;) for does not everything here seem to speak of you to me? Here are the books you gave me—the lessons you taught me. I cannot call into action a single thought—I cannot bring into operation any one accomplishment I possess—but your image accompanies it. And why? All emanated from you. You were my instructor, my guardian, my friend, my brother. Is it not natural, then, that I should love you—should always be thinking of you—and should desire to hear from you?

"I am every moment considering what would be your opinion upon different subjects. Whether you would be

satisfied with my conduct? If what I am studying would render me more attractive in your eyes? And, after satisfying myself upon these queries, I pursue my studies with renewed spirit, and make such progress as to win the approbation of my teachers. A great part of my leisure time I spend in the society of our dear friend Mrs. Cordial. I love her so because she is so eloquent in your praise. She is never tired of talking of you. The Rev. Mr. Thoroughgood has been as kind to me as a parent. Indeed, he has been so very good, that I can never forget the obligations under which he has placed me. He often speaks of you; and good Mrs. Thrift, too, is ever saying such handsome things about you! Next to hearing you talk or hearing from you, nothing gives me so much pleasure as to hear any one praise you. But they could not do any other than commend, dear Vincent, if they knew how very good you are. You will think me, I am afraid, a silly girl for writing so much about yourself; but there is but one subject upon which I can always find plenty to say, and I do not wish to be deprived of it: I am sure I shall never find a better. There is only one thing which makes me grieve for the loss of speech—it is because I cannot talk about you; yet, though that blessing is not allowed me, I am left the enjoyment of another scarcely less gratifying—I can pray for you. How fervently, and how frequently, I offer up supplications for your happiness, Heaven alone can tell; still, I can never sufficiently evince my gratitude. To you I owe all things. Think me, then, not childish or annoying, if I acknowledge the obligation, and attempt to do honour to the merits you have taught me to venerate.

“Strange things have recently taken place, which have made a great change in my situation and prospects; but I am unaltered. Do not imagine that any circumstances could divert my present sentiments out of the channel which has always found its source in your goodness. Indeed, I would rather not possess the advantages which this change has produced, if I thought it would deprive me of your good opinion, or weaken those feelings towards you your kindness created. I am incapable of change. The origin of this domestic revolution, I can scarcely inform you. Mrs. Cordial tells me that my mother-in-law deserted my father while they were in Italy; and that now he regrets exceed-

ingly having so neglected me. But, much as I love my father, I am not sorry that Lady Honoria induced him to treat me unkindly ; for, had I not been so much despised by them both, I should not be indebted to you for all that you have done for me.

“ Lord Melcombe was greatly surprised when, after inquiring for his long-neglected Dora, I was ushered into his presence. He was much gratified in learning that he has you to thank for the attention with which my wants and comforts have been gratified : for I made Mrs. Thrift tell him the whole history of your generous and noble conduct. He seemed quite astonished that he should have been kept ignorant so long of things, in which, he says, he ought to have been deeply interested, and desired me to express to you his acknowledgments, with his request that you will return to England as speedily as possible. He would have written, but the loss of my poor little brother has made him so unhappy, that he appears as if he could think of nothing else. I wish the sweet child had lived. I am sure I would have loved him dearly. But the will of Heaven be done !

“ My father behaves so very kindly to me ! All the first masters are employed to finish my education ; and I am supplied with every luxury which he thinks will afford me pleasure. In the midst of all these enjoyments this grandeur, this crowd of acquaintances, I often think I was much happier when I used to sit by your side, in the housekeeper's room, while you were endeavouring to implant in my mind the first rudiments of knowledge ; and you, and Mrs. Cordial, and Mr. Thoroughgood, were the only friends I had in the world. The multitude of new faces that surround me I would gladly exchange for one that smiled when all the rest looked nothing but scorn. Willingly would I return into insignificance to be again your protégé. But you will not cease to exhibit that kind interest which you used to take in me, now that you may think I have ceased to require it. I do require it, dear Vincent : I shall be wretched if I am to be deprived of it.

“ Come, and be once more my instructor ; for I am sure I could learn more from you in an hour than all here could teach me in a month. Come, and be my brother ; prove that, if one has been taken from me, I have not lost another. Come, and be my friend ; for, though every one appears

kind, it is not the kindness you have shown. Be again to me all that you once were,—the noble, the good, the generous, the patient, the forbearing, the gentle, and sincere,—and I will endeavour all in my power to make myself worthy of your attention—to become all you would wish me ; and you shall seek in vain for a pupil who will so honour your instructions, a sister so anxious for your affection, and a companion so desirous of your friendship, as

“ Your grateful and affectionate cousin,

“ DORA.

“ P. S. My father talks of taking me to town very shortly ; where, he says, I am to appear in a style worthy of my rank and expectations. I dread this exposure to the public eye. I would much rather remain in obscurity where I am. The world of fashion is not my world ; I have no desire to enter its dominions. However, my father must be obeyed. Indeed, he behaves so very kindly, that it would be quite ungrateful were I to attempt to thwart his desires. I must, therefore, endeavour to conquer my repugnance to mingle much in society ; but wherever I may go, however I may be situated,—though I may be placed among the gay and the idle, the proud and the vain, sharing in their pleasures, mingling in their amusements, and influenced by their vanities,—do not think, dear Vincent, that I shall less frequently bear you in my remembrance. I should despise myself if I thought I could ever forget your kindness. Let me hear from you soon ; or, perhaps, you may be enabled to arrive here before I could receive your letter. I shall be so glad to see you ! every one, however, will be made happy by your reappearance among us ; for, indeed, it seems as if years had passed since your departure ; and there was nothing but gladness to be felt or seen when you used to be here. Ah ! there is a sweet gratification in the remembrance of those days ! I hope you have not forgotten them or me. No, I am sure you have not ! you are too good to be so forgetful. God bless you, and keep you well and happy !”

The perusal of these letters threw me into a reverie. What a sweetness, a freshness, a holiness appeared in the last ! I thought of the writer ; the guileless, gentle, affec-

tionate, confiding girl. With what a devotion she regarded me ! so pure, so disinterested ! and I, lost in my abstraction, forgot that I was not alone, till Mephistophiles, in a voice that now sounded hateful and discordant, while searching me with his hot eyes, as if to read the sweet thoughts in which I had been indulging, addressed me :—

“Most noble master ! Of a surety thou dost forget the business on which, but a moment since, thou wert as eager as a lawyer after a rich client. While thou art lost in admiration at the simplicity of Lady Dora, the equally simple Francisca is still undiscovered. This is the thing men call love ! It is a sort of cord that ties a knave and a fool together ; sometimes two fools ; more frequently two knaves !”

“Ay !” said I, not noticing the purport of his remark, and still musing on the single-heartedness of my devoted correspondent, “let us seek Francisca.”

We started. We passed outside the town, and were strolling along the banks of the Leine, I still rapt up in my reverery ; my companion singing snatches of humorous songs or making wild remarks upon my conduct. “And so,” said I to myself, “my little cousin is dead. That accounts for the phantom seen by me on my open palm, in the witches’ glen, wearing mourning. What can have become of Francisca ? ’Tis very strange ! Dora ! dear, innocent, unsuspecting Dora ! how unworthy I am of your affection !”

“Verily, my honoured master !” said Mephistophiles, in that sharp, scoffing manner that seemed to cut into the bone, “thou puttest me much in mind of a certain innocent animal whose superabundance of ear is more generally known than honoured. Like thee, he had two objects of his affection, and both were similarly attractive. But, not like thee, he had the sense to desire to eat those fascinating things that held him to the spot by the influence of their charms. The puzzle to him was, as both were equally agreeable, which ought to be devoured first ; and, as he could not settle the point of precedence to his satisfaction, he died of starvation. Most learned ass, which of these charming objects art thou going to devour first ?”

“Peace, wretch !” I exclaimed, in anger, “nor mock me with thy babbling !”

Mephistophiles commenced singing—

"The devil he sat on his garden gate,
 A picking his teeth with the point of his tail;
 And because he'd been doing so much work of late,
 He grew sick, and his appetite often would fail:
 When a toad that came by, in a carriage-and-six,
 Walked up to the idler, so grave and so ghastly,
 Felt his pulse, viewed his tongue, and did other wise tricks
 That are practised on earth by Sir Charles and Sir Astley."

"And I am now heir to the Melcombe peerage!" said I, inattentive to the proceedings of my companion. "This is one step gained towards the completion of my ambitious projects. It will bring me influence, political and social—advantages not to be despised."

Mephistophiles continued—

"'Oh, oh!' says the doctor, 'your majesty's ill!
 You must take night and morning a draught and a pill.'
 But the devil the toad 'neath his hoof quickly jammed,
 And said, 'I take your stuff! If I do I'll be damned!'
 Then his lordship grew worse: in vain had he tried
 A draught of the Styx and a bath in the Lethe;
 Till, worn by his torments, one morning he cried,
 'Must I die like a dog? No: go fetch Abernethy.'"

"Sweet Dora!" I continued, in my revery; "how well I remember that graceful figure, those mild affectionate eyes, that gentle smile! And in what manner am I likely to return your disinterested fondness?"

Mephistophiles again proceeded—

"The doctor he came, looking surly and sage,
 One hand in his pocket, one stuck in his waist;
 Said he, 'Read my book;' and he mentioned the page;
 'Take blue pill every night. Where's my fee? I'm in haste.'
 Then said Lucifer, fiercely, 'This can't be endured!
 You cure my disease without wishing to learn it?—
 I've got indigestion!' 'Well, that's to be cured,'
 Replied John: 'live on sixpence a week, friend, and earn it!'"

"Dear Francisca!" I exclaimed, "why have you fled from me? Return to me again, and you shall find that I am still the kind and loving being you once thought me. I will never more neglect you. I will never treat you with unkindness. Let me know that you are safe, and all may yet be well!"

My companion commenced anew:—

"There was a little maid, and she wore a little bonnet,
And she had a little finger with a little ring upon it ;
And, what's a little odd, her little heart was then
In love, but not a little, with the best of little men.

For the little youth had exercised his little flatt'ring tongue,
And down before her little feet his little knees he flung ;
He pressed her little hand, and in her little face he gazed,
And looked as though his little head had been a little crazed.

Alas ! her little lover did with little warning leave her,
And she found him little better than a little gay deceiver :
Then in a little moment, stifling all her little wishes,
She took a little jump all among the little fishes.

Now, all you little maidens whose little loves grow fonder,
Upon the little moral of this little song may ponder :
Beware of little trinkets, little men, and little sighs ;
For you little know what great things from little things may rise."

"Master dear !" exclaimed Mephistophiles, suddenly, while directing my attention to something that appeared floating on the water close to the bank, "is yon thing a dog ? Ah ! perhaps its kind master has thus rewarded its faithful services ! 'Tis the way of the world to get rid of an attached servant or a devoted friend, when age or poverty leaves him no longer the power of conferring assistance. The dog is useless, says benevolent human nature ; let him be put out of the way !"

I approached the edge of the river to get a nearer inspection of the object. It appeared enveloped in drapery.

"By Heaven, 'tis a woman !" I exclaimed, as I hastened to drag the body out of the water.

"Tis very strange," said my companion, while he assisted me, "that these women have such a partiality for this temperate element ! They show it in a thousand ways : they seldom drink anything else—in public ; they perfume themselves with fragrant waters. If they become artists, they almost invariably patronise water-colours ; and when they commit suicide, nine out of ten prove their preference for their favourite liquid by dying a watery death."

I thought I recognised the dress. In an agony of fear I pulled aside the long hair that concealed her features. There could no longer be any doubt : in that cold, stiff, inanimate

corpse I saw all that remained of the once gay, kind, and gentle Francisca.

"It is the Fränzchen!" remarked Mephistophiles, in a tone more of gratification than surprise. "Well, I thought we should find her!"

"Cold-hearted demon!" I cried, unable to bear his accursed mockery, "this is thy work!"

"Not so, good master of mine," replied he; "it is thine own; thou art alone to blame in this. It is therefore rather unfriendly that I should be accused of a crime of which the accuser is the chief cause. But man is naturally ungrateful. Had we not better remove the corpse?"

"Touch her not!" I exclaimed, in all the bitterness of heart I then endured. "Pollute not her sacred body with thy damning touch! And is this death?" I continued, gazing in grief and horror upon my first victim. "And can we always call it to our aid? Fearful power, that turns into a mere clod a creature that was yesterday breathing all the sweet impulses of life!"

"Sagest of philosophers," said Mephistophiles, "though it is said dead men tell no tales, we know nothing of the babblings of women after their decease; and as they are a kind of animal given to much unnecessary talking during their lives, it is more than probable that—"

"Peace, wretch!" I replied, fiercely; "thy voice is worse than the croak of the approaching vulture to the dying pilgrim in the desert!"

Mephistophiles began to whistle. I sat down by the side of her whom I had murdered by my cruelty, and gave up my guilty spirit to all the pangs of remorse. It was a remorse without a repentance—the self-torture which follows the evil deed, unmingling with a desire to become better. The grief I experienced arose more from regret at having been deprived of one whose love ministered to my enjoyments than from any sorrow that my treachery had hurried out of the world, in all the deformity of crime, a being who might have become its ornament and its blessing. All good thoughts seemed to be rooted out of my soul. At last I rose, and, assisted by my companion, in the light of the cold moon and the fading stars, bore the body of the unfortunate Francisca to her father's house. As I laid my melancholy burden down in the salon, my eye was caught by the bright blade of a *schläger*

that had been left there by a student. In a tumult of conflicting passions, I caught up the weapon, and was going to sheath it in my body, when my hand was arrested.

"Art thou mad, worthy master?" inquired Mephistophiles, "that thou wouldst do the world such an irreparable injury as to deprive it of thy good qualities? But how absurd are the actions of men! how contradictory! how thoughtless! The lover pursues his mistress with an earnestness as if his life depended upon his success. He succeeds, and in a short time he grows careless of his 'heart's treasure;' neglects 'the comfort of his soul;' and then leaves 'the object of his everlasting love' to pine and perish beneath the influence of his withering treachery and her overpowering shame! Such is man!"

"Peace, scoffer!" I exclaimed. "Wouldst crush my bruised spirit by thy impious blasphemies?"

"Verily, thy spirit hath grown delicate of a sudden!" he replied, with one of those sneers that seemed to scorch all the better feelings of my nature—like the hot breath of the simoon coming upon the unprepared traveller. "And thou art no better than the rest. A week since thou didst care no more for this senseless lump of flesh than for a haunch of venison when off it thou hast made thy banquet. She then loved thee, and was worthy of thy love. Thou art now distracted, and ready to make a hole in thy immaculate body, because thy carelessness drove her to seek her own destruction. She can love thee no more, and is only fit for the worms!"

"True! too true!" I cried; and I groaned inwardly at the thought of my own treachery.

Mephistophiles laughed—a wild fiendish laugh of scorn and derision, the tones of which pierced into my aching brain as flashes of lightning cleave a forest oak. At this moment old Mahlgeld, who had been all the night with his friends searching for his daughter, having heard of my arrival and Francisca's decease, rushed into the room, armed with a drawn sword, with the fury of a maniac, and the desperation of despair.

"Villain!" cried he, in a voice choking with passion, as he bent his eyes upon me as upon one whose form he hated to the death; "seducer! murderer! Thou hast robbed me of my child—my only one—my beautiful—my pride—my

joy! A father's strength still remains in this right arm, and it is not yet deprived of a soldier's skill! I will have justice!—a speedy and bloody retribution for the wrong thou hast done me and her. Let me tear thy false heart out by the roots, and fling it to the eagles! Let me hew thee in pieces for the dogs to feed on! Let me sweep such a miscreant from the face of the polluted earth! Thou shalt die!"

He fell upon me with the spring of a tiger. I mechanically raised the weapon I held; the point of it entered his breast. With such force had he fallen upon me that my blade was buried up to the hilt in his body, and he fell by the side of his daughter's corpse, pierced through the heart. The blood flowed fast and freely, till the old man's gray hairs were dabbled with gore, and his quivering limbs stiffened into the rigidity of death. He uttered not a word; but his dying look spoke more than a thousand tongues. I gazed upon the fearful spectacle, terrified and bewildered. By what hellish impulse I had been induced to raise my hand against the old man, I knew not. I had no desire of harming him. I cared not for defending myself. My senses became tossed in a chaos of confusion, and I know not what occurred till I found myself surrounded and rudely secured by a crowd of threatening villagers. I looked around for Mephistophiles: he was nowhere to be seen. Accompanied by the imprecations of an infuriated mob—my life endangered at every step by many who seemed desirous of my instant death—manacled, and guarded by a throng of the police—I was marched to the Carcer, there to be carefully imprisoned till the morning, when I was to be brought before the civil authorities to answer for my crime.

The walls of my prison were completely covered by fantastic designs, drawn by its former inmates with bits of charcoal. Caricatures of the professors were found in the midst of dancing skeletons and grinning demons. Here were groups of nondescripts, of the strangest shapes, and in the most ludicrous attitudes. There stood the figures of several students, ornamented with asses' heads, diligently poring over some huge volume. The jagers were represented in every ridiculous shape that could be imagined; and skulls and cross-bones, with absurd epitaphs beneath them, distinguished the names of the most noxious members of the senate.

The drawings, though many of them rude, abounded with humour and satire.

In this chamber I had full leisure allowed me for reflection. My thoughts seemed to have the fangs of serpents, and thrust their rankling poison into my heart, till the stream of life appeared changed into a channel of foul and pestilential disease. Into what a situation had I placed myself! I should be tried as a murderer! Perhaps be sentenced to an ignominious death! and become a spectacle of fear and indignation to the multitude! Even if I escaped so vile an end, my hopes were scarcely less favourable. The suspected crime would still hang about me, and debar me from intimate communion with the proud rich and the virtuous poor. Few would enter into companionship with a suspected criminal, except those whose characters could not suffer by the association, and I should thus lose all hope of attaining that rank in society to which I had aspired. My ambition fell to the ground. From the starry worlds to which it had been raised, it was hurled headlong to the earth. This was the result of my unholy desire to taste the fruits of forbidden knowledge. They looked so fair and tempting to the sight! but I now found them, like the fabulous apples of the Dead Sea, turn in the mouth to ashes and bitterness. And had I gone through all the horrors of a familiarity with the creatures of darkness to meet with this reward? Yes! I had rushed, with the gambler's dream, to gain every thing, and had lost all. I had sacrificed my hope in heaven and my ambition on earth. I had been duped—beggared—betrayed. Then I thought of my victims. I had come like a blight, and spread sorrow and desolation in an amiable family. Poor Francisca! her death seemed like the pressure of a mountain upon my heart, weighing down every hope, and crushing all gladness. I felt abandoned to a sense of wretchedness too overpowering to be borne. Life became hateful to me: it appeared a dream from which it was a relief to wake; for that nightmare, conscience, was suffocating me with terrors. I began to think how I might most easily rid myself of the burden under which I laboured, considering any state to be better than that of existence.

"Life!" I exclaimed, as I paced my solitary chamber, "thou subtle spirit which pervades our nature, as light gives lustre to the gem—coming we know not whence, and going

we know not whither—'tis a wise provision that gives to the being power over thee ! for when existence becomes wearisome he can throw it off, and thus escape from the destroying fangs of care—the vampire that hath gorged my heart's best blood, till I have become as weak as a young child. I will free myself from this state of suffering. I will conquer life, and drive it from its strongholds in this unprofitable flesh. What there is beyond the grave I know not, and I care as little, being well assured that to me the change from life to death must, at the present moment, be to my advantage. I look back upon the past, and see all is barren. I behold the present a wilderness of sharp thorns and poisonous weeds ; and I view in the future an interminable desert of arid sand, breathing naught but famine and pestilence. From the beginning to the end is void. I will escape out of this nothingness. If I cannot lead opinion, I will not be its victim !”

With such thoughts I proceeded to effect my purpose ; but scarcely had I commenced the necessary preparations, when I observed, on a nail to which I was going to fix my handkerchief, a spider of the very smallest dimensions ; in fact, so minute that I should not have observed the insect, if my gaze had not been drawn to it by the peculiar fascination of its eye, that looked a speck of fire. While I gazed it seemed to enlarge. By degrees its body swelled, its legs extended, claws became visible, and two burning eyeballs glared full upon me. Still it went on increasing in bulk, till a huge frightful monster, in the form of a spider, filling up one side of the room, with immense globes of fire, that beamed with a scorching light, stood as if threatening instant destruction by clasping me with its gigantic arms. I was not alarmed, although the sight was sufficiently terrific to frighten the boldest heart. I knew that I stood in the presence of some powerful spirit, and my association with the powers of darkness had destroyed the influence of human fear.

“What wantest thou, fierce spirit ?” said I ; “is it I who am to become thy prey ? Thou, and all thy accursed crew have deceived me. Ye promised that my utmost ambition should be satisfied.”

“So it shall, my worthy master !” replied the voice of *Mephistophiles*.

"Ha!" I exclaimed with surprise, as I recognised the voice, "is it thou? Keep that horrid form to frighten children with; appear to me in a more human shape, and explain the reason of my having been betrayed into this disgraceful position."

I had scarcely spoken my desire before the monster vanished; and the figure of Mephistophiles, clad as a German nobleman of the highest rank, bearing on his breast a profusion of the most highly-prized decorations, appeared before me. "Now," said my companion, "although I do not think I have gained much by the exchange from a spider to a prince, for both delight in fly-catching and other ferocious propensities, I have fulfilled thy command. I came to save thee from the fate of a murderer; but thou appearest so much delighted with that way of death, that thou wast going to make thine own halter, and become thine own executioner!"

"Canst save me?" I cried, eagerly.

"Easily," he replied.

"But the doors are fastened—the windows barred—sentinels guard the room—and a strong force of police are close at hand," I exclaimed.

"Formidable obstructions, truly!" he observed, sneeringly. "Now attend to me. We both start for England on the instant, where important business waits your attention, and many good friends desire my company. However, as you English cannot see any thing worthy of observation in a foreigner unless he possesses a title, and as the more exalted his nobility, and the more unpronounceable his name, the greater in your opinion appears to be his desert, I have taken the title of the Prince Von Völligdunkel Gross-Siegelbewahrer; and have no doubt that your countrymen will lavish upon me every mark of respect as soon as they are made acquainted with my arrival among them. Henceforth I leave the student, and become the prince."

So saying, he touched the heavily-barred door with his finger, and it opened as easily as a wicket-gate. Pointing to the open passage, my companion directed me to lead the way. I advanced through the opening: Mephistophiles followed, and the door closed behind us. In the same day we were in London.

BOOK THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

A breakfast at an hotel.—What Mephistophiles thinks of the public press in England.—Its political and moral influence.—A hint to ladies over the way.—Mephistophiles tells an amusing story of Billy Gridiron and a barber, which the reader, if he is a Scotchman, will not read.—National, domestic, and religious hatred proved to be virtues universally practised.—The qualifications of a good hater described.—Mephistophiles says something which occasions me much uneasiness.—Its consequence.

THE morning was rainy: it exhibited one of those thick, damp, showery atmospheres that are such frequent visitors to the metropolitans. We had breakfasted upon coffee of an indifferent quality, with rolls generally called French, for what reason I know not, unless it be because they are always of English manufacture: the spongy interiors of which we softened with an oleaginous liquid that went by the name of butter. A sort of farinaceous leather, called dry-toast, also appeared. The furniture of the breakfast-table was elegant and convenient—of china and of silver. A pigeon-pie had more attractions for me, and to that I paid almost my exclusive attention, washing it down with very respectable Rhenish. Cold meats, and other materials of a substantial meal, were in abundance. Mephistophiles had been busily employed upon a devilled chicken, which he seemed to relish. Our conversation was limited and unimportant; and, after satisfying our appetites, we both had recourse to the morning papers. I looked at the fashionable intelligence in that oracle of the beau-monde, the Morning Post, and there had the felicity of observing our arrivals noticed at full length. Mephistophiles amused himself over the Herald.

"It is extraordinary," said I, as the breakfast things were clearing away, "what an influence the public press has in this country."

"Not at all strange," replied my companion; "some countries are priest-ridden—some ridden by soldiers—and England delights to be newspaper-ridden. Every man who can read reads a newspaper; those who are not so well educated have it read to them; and, as few people will take the trouble to think for themselves, the public press exercises a political power which you think extraordinary, but which I consider very natural. In London there are fifty-five journals, of which thirteen appear daily, and forty-two once or more frequently during the week: in the provinces one hundred and ninety-three are published; Scotland boasts of forty-six, and Ireland of seventy-five—making a total of three hundred and sixty-nine, averaging a circulation of a thousand each. Supposing that the contents of each paper are made known to ten persons—which is a small average, for in the numerous coffee-houses and taverns the readers are almost innumerable; then the newspaper venders lend them out at so much an hour to several individuals; and almost every paper goes from hand to hand among private purchasers till it is worn out—this makes a total of about three million six hundred and ninety thousand. But this is not all: the magazines and reviews are also political journals, and their sale is from five hundred to twelve thousand: they have full as numerous a circle of readers as their daily or weekly contemporaries. The pamphlets must next be considered, as well as the cheap journals published for the political instruction of the poor. There are at least five millions influenced by the public press. It is a mighty engine, but often wielded with little judgment. Were it properly directed, nothing could stand against it. Luckily, however, for the government, a great portion of the press is always under its control; and the rest of the political papers, generally squabbling among themselves, are not thought so dangerous as they might be made.

"Frequently the ministers are sadly puzzled what to do. The utmost license is allowed; and, in the possession of that privilege, the opposition journals abuse the government and their measures in terms which would create a rebellion in any other country. Every public character, distinguished by a different line of politics from that advocated by a portion of the newspapers, is sure to be libelled. The whole public life of a minister is exposed, commented on, and abused:

his private life seldom escapes similar usage ; his person is ridiculed, himself denounced, and his family and friends held up to public scorn and ridicule. If the individual or the government proceed by a prosecution against the libellers, the outcry which ensues is tremendous. Every paper throughout the kingdom joins in vehemently declaring, that that hallowed bulwark of English freedom, the liberty of the press, is in danger. The jury, well aware that, if through their means, a heavy punishment should be inflicted on the offenders, they would become the objects of general opprobrium, are as lenient as possible, and in nine cases out of ten return verdicts in favour of the defendants. The consequence is, that, when he is proceeded against by criminal information, the libeller escapes, the press increases in influence, and the jury are lauded to the skies as honest, fearless, and impartial Englishmen : the result encouraging other juries on future occasions to follow their example."

"I cannot agree to the truth of your representation," said I, laying down the newspaper, and examining my meer-schaum—a pipe having, by habit, become almost requisite to my existence. "You have taken a prejudiced view of the subject. The public press in England has a highly moral, as well as a powerful political influence."

"Vastly moral !" said my companion, with one of his peculiar smiles. "Read its description of criminal offences—its accounts of trials for rape, crim. con., or seduction—how minute, how glowing, how exciting. Where is the young mind, ay, or the old one, that does not feel a sensible gratification at their perusal. Of course that gratification has its source in the love of virtue ! Then observe the contents of some of the papers published for the exclusive edification of Sunday readers—to be perused before church, or after. How beneficial to the religiously-inclined are their graphic disclosures of vice in high life, or crime in low ! How much a young girl's morality is strengthened by perusing a highly-coloured history of Lady Somebody's intrigue with her footman ! How greatly improved a virtuous youth must be, by continually reading some charming account of a fashionable roué. The lower orders must wonderfully increase in respect and admiration of their superiors, seeing in how moral and useful a manner the latter conduct themselves ! And the upper classes will, of course, become more vir-

tuous, seeing what good examples are continually set before them !”

“ But there are only one or two journals of that nature published ; and I cannot help thinking that they do good,” I said, applying myself to the *tabac*.

“ They benefit their proprietors,” he replied ; “ for these moral papers have a more extensive circulation than others of a less assuming character. But do not suppose that I think lightly of the utility of these publications : to me they must ever appear useful, valuable, and agreeable. I always mean to encourage them.”

Mephistophiles rose from his seat, went to the window, and put up his glass at a pretty woman dressing her hair in a bedroom on the opposite side of the way ; who, seeing a military looking man admire her, was in no hurry to escape from his observation. At last, pretending to have just caught sight of him, and apparently offended, she pulled down the blind ; yet did it in such a manner as to allow herself a perfect view of the handsome gentleman whose attention she had attracted. “ It is a thousand pities,” remarked Mephistophiles, stretching himself, and preparing to follow my example with a pipe of *cnaster*, “ that so fine a creature should have contracted a *liaison* with her husband’s apprentice—a meek youth of seventeen !”

“ Is it possible ?” I asked, with surprise.

“ Every thing is possible to a woman,” replied my companion, with an eloquent shrug of his shoulders.

I could myself have admired the woman, for she was remarkably beautiful ; but as soon as I heard this account of her, from one who I had good reason for believing was well informed on the subject, I dismissed her from my mind with contempt, and took up the *Political Register*, which lay with the other papers on the table.

“ This pamphlet is written by an extraordinary man—a man of powerful genius—an eloquent writer, and an able speaker,” I observed.

“ You speak of Billy Gridiron,” said Mephistophiles, “ and it reminds me of an occurrence of which I was an eyewitness.”

“ Relate it by all means,” I replied ; “ there is nothing you observe which is not interesting.”

“ Mankind ought to me much obliged to you for the com-

pliment," exclaimed Mephistophiles with a sneer, "as it is to them my observations are continually directed. But to my tale:—A few days since I was sauntering about that part of the modern Babylon called the city, admiring all the social virtues which I observed in the herd of money-savers, who there pursue their philanthropic vocations. I turned out of Fleet-street into a narrow court; and, fancying that I might find some amusement in that universal rendezvous of the idle and talkative, a barber's shop, I entered one. The windows of the shop I selected for observation were not decorated after the fashion of your West-End Barbaros-sas, with wax models of most seductive-looking humanity, ornamented with such heads of hair as must be the envy of all to whom nature hath denied similar charms, and with costly ornaments of questionable utility, manufactured more for the purpose of inducing the wealthy to become purchasers than with the design of conferring upon them any ideas of cleanliness or elegance; but nearly all the panes were covered with designs, in glaring colours, descriptive of the occupation of the resident; and 'Shave well for a penny,' and 'Hair-cutting in all its branches,' in large red and yellow letters, proclaimed still more conspicuously to the passers-by what sort of doings were going on inside. The name of Kennedy, and two pasteboard models of 'the human face divine,' with complexion apparently formed of whitening and brickdust, made up the whole of what was visible outside, of the name and profession of the man who resided within.

"After opening the door of the shop, I found myself in a small room sumptuously carpeted with sawdust. Upon the walls were various pictures—coloured prints, old and damaged. I observed among them a representation of a monkey shaving a cat,—a design more appropriate than the owner or his customers imagined. Over the fireplace, on which boiling water was steaming in readiness for immediate use, hung a cracked looking-glass in a black frame; at a little distance was a coarse towel, which bore signs of some service; and in its vicinity various ballads, among which were 'Death and the Lady,' 'Bruce's address to his Countrymen,' and 'Auld lang syne,' nailed against the wall. A Dutch clock gave evidence of the progress of time; a black cat slept on the hearth; and a lad (a parish appren-

tice), who had outgrown his jacket and trousers, in another corner of the room, was coaxing into curl a common-councilman's wig. In the centre of the apartment a tall and cadaverous-looking individual, with high cheek bones, red whiskers, and crop to match, most luxuriantly curled, wearing an apron which was once white (bearing in its huge pockets his professional apparatus), and with sleeves of a similar fabric, was operating upon the chin of a customer, an apoplectic-looking man, with a red nose and a capacious corporation, landlord of the neighbouring public-house, whose beard he had nearly succeeded in removing. Shortly after I had entered a person made his appearance, dressed like a respectable farmer, his face of a florid complexion, with features expressive of health and good-humour, and his hair of a pure silvery whiteness. He was strongly built, evidently in the possession of all his faculties, and might be about sixty years of age. He strode into the room, seemingly taking no notice of any person present; sat himself down in an empty chair, and took up the preceding day's edition of the Times. Glancing his eye hurriedly over the leading articles, he every now and then exclaimed,—‘Pooh!’ ‘Fudge!’ ‘Twaddle!’ ‘Cant!’ ‘Lies!’ Then observing the barber at leisure, he flung down the newspaper in disdain, and placed himself in the vacant seat.

“Mister Kennedy received his customer with a bend which was meant to be graceful; and, after having fixed a cloth under his chin, proceeded to make the lather of the proper consistence.

“‘A braw day this, sir!’ blandly insinuated the man of shaving.

“‘Yes!’ briefly replied the unknown.

“The operator then commenced sharpening his razor on a leather-strap nailed to the table; but during the process his tongue was not allowed to remain in idleness. By a wise dispensation of Providence, barbers have been gifted with extraordinary conversational activity. The great ant-eater inserts his long tongue into the ant's nest, and the poor insects, attracted by its smoothness and oiliness, throng round it, and are devoured. The barber catches his prey by the same means.”

“It is strange,” I exclaimed, interrupting him, “that in all climates barbers should be remarkable for their loquacity.”

"Not at all, my noble master!" replied Mephistophiles; "stranger things occur every day; and those amusing fools mankind pay no attention to them. The Christian barber and the infidel, the black shaver and the white, are and must be the same. 'Tis their vocation, Hal.' All men are not equally eloquent, but practice makes many so. Demosthenes commenced the study of oratory by addressing the winds with pebbles in his mouth. Your members of parliament frequently do the same thing in the House of Commons; and if they have not pebbles in their mouths, what they let fall from them is equally worthless and indigestible. The first part of a barber's education is, learning how to talk. He does not gain this acquirement by studying 'The Speaker;' and seldom knowing much of grammar, his parts of speech owe no obligation to the schoolmaster. Early in life he is initiated into all the mysteries of gossip: the weather, the news, politics, and religion—private scandal, and public rumour are soon made familiar to him; and they form topics of never-failing interest, to be brought forward, on future occasions, as a part of his stock in trade. In whatever part of the world you may happen to be, if you wish to gain any intelligence of the weather, or of the government, or of the neighbourhood, their changes, laws, and history, go and get shaved, and you will hear it all in five minutes."

"Your notion is an odd one," said I, "though I cannot think it a true one."

"Who ever heard the truth?" asked Mephistophiles, with his usual sneer. "But to return to my story."

"Sure, sir, ye've been reading the noos?" inquired the barber, as he stropped the razor; "though I'm any thing but indifferent to the public weal, I canna find time to mak mysel acquainted with a' the transactions o' state. These poleetical changes, in my hooble opinion, are of mickle importance. Dinna ye think so, sir?"

"I don't know!" gruffly replied the interrogated individual.

"You see, sir," continued the talker, nothing daunted, "the present parliament have laboured weel for the public gude. It canna be denied, they might have conferred upon the kintra many substantial benefits which they have neglected doing. But Rome was na built in a day, was it, sir?"

“ ‘I didn’t build it,’ answered his victim, more gruffly than before.

“ ‘For my part,’ continued the barber, laying the lather rapidly over the beard of the person he was speaking to, ‘I am quite dissatisfied with that Reform Bill they made sic a fuss about. What has it done? nothing. Where are a’ the advantages the menisters promised it should confer upon the people? I have not met with a single indivieedual who has gained the smallest profit by the passing o’ that measure. But you see the hale kintra was mad about it, sir. Folk run gabbling from house to house, as if they were demented; and if you listened to the pair daft cretura, you would have imagined that, when the Reform Bill became the law o’ the land, legs o’ mutton and quatern loaves would go flying in at every poor man’s windy. It was morally impossible, in the nature of any legeeslative measure, to come to sic a catastrophe: and so I told ’em. I reasoned wi’em logically and pheelosophically on the subjec. But they would na’ listen to reason; and they ha’ now the pleasure of reaping the fruits o’ their disappointment.’ After a pause of a few seconds’ duration, in which the operator got his razor in readiness, he continued. ‘Did you see any thing interesting in the Times, sir?’

“ ‘I never see any thing but lies in that beastly paper,’ observed the stranger, with some asperity.

“ ‘Hoot awa! mon!’ exclaimed Mister Kennedy, with considerable surprise; ‘sure an it’s the leading journal; a maist respectable periodical! professing leeberal opinions; always pooblishing the earliest intelligence; and then its leading articles are so pointed and clever! The lads must ha’ sharp wits that write ’em.’ He commenced his attack upon the bristles, yet continued his conversation, with the nose of his victim between his finger and thumb, while the edge of the razor was gliding over his chin.

“ ‘There’s an uncommon clever article in yesterday’s paper, which deserves your attention. It’s an attack—sic a smart attack isn’t written every day in the year—on that arch impostor, Billy Gridiron. Sit still, sir, or maybe ye’ll get a cut wi’ the razor!—Ye see, the old bone-grubber, in a number o’ his Poleetical Register, a blackguard pooblication, which no respectable mon would alloo in his hoose.—I beg, sir, ye’ll sit still! its unco dangerous to wriggle ye’re chops

about in sic a fantastical manner!—The old atheistical re-pobblcan attacked the Times! only think o' the fellow's assurance, to go to abuse the leading journal! And he called it the bloody old Times, and mony sic sanguinary epithets. But he's a shocking low fellow, sir; and, like his old crony, Tom Paine, whose bones he brought over fra' America, deesn't care a fig for morality or religion.—Well, I never met with ony person so feedjity as you are: sure ye must be uncommon nervous?—Well, sir, the editor of the Times gangs at him, and, in the twinkling of a bed-post, smashes him to a mummy. Oh, the puir deevil has had sic a handling, that I doot vary much if he ever recovers it. But I'm glad on't. It serves him quite right. The vagabond ought to have been hanged long ago; don't ye think so sir?"

"The only reply the barber got to his question was a rude shove, given with all the stranger's strength, that sent the former and his razor spinning in different directions. At the same moment up jumped the stranger, with the lather remaining on one side of his face, the cloth about his shoulders, his eyes flashing fury, and his appearance bearing that of a man who had vainly endeavoured to suppress his passions, but had now determined to allow them their full indulgence. As the barber fell to the ground, the black cat awoke from her sleep, and raised her back in alarm; and the parish apprentice dropped the curling-irons from his trembling grasp, and opened his mouth with amazement.

"“You nasty, lousy, stinking Scotchman!” exclaimed the stranger to the prostrate shaver.

““It's false, sir, I'm nothing o' the kind!” replied the other, rubbing that muscle known to the anatomist as the *gluteus maximus*; ‘and if there's sic a thing as law to be had, I'll have it. A pretty thing, indeed, if industrious tradesmen are to be assaulted and abused in this shameful fashion. Sir, you've insulted me! Yo've cast reflections on my country!’

““Your *country*!” said the stranger, contemptuously; ‘why, you don't mean to style that miserable, dirty, beggarly province, called Scotland, a country? the home of rags and filth, of disease and vermin; a wilderness of barren rocks and fetid lakes; where nothing grows but the

heather and the thistle, a few stunted fir-trees, and some half-withered pines. A wretched place, inhabited by a few beggarly, thievish, cowardly miscreants—

“‘Cowardly!’ exclaimed the indignant Scotchman, as soon as he could find courage to interrupt the torrent of abuse directed towards his beloved birth-place: ‘do ye call the people o’ Scotland cowardly? Were Wallace, were Robert Bruce, were the victors o’ Bannockburn cowards, ye false loon?’

“‘Yes, you poor, pitiful, sneaking knave, they were all contemptible cowards, or they would have stood up and fought like Englishmen, instead of stealing about like thieves in the dark, and surprising their enemies when off their guard. The battle of Bannockburn is their grand boast; and how did they gain that? By digging pits, into which a tired army—and imbecile king were entrapped; a stratagem worthy of their Tom Thumb—the great heroes! Did they ever gain a fair stand-up fight? Halidon Hill, Falkirk, Cutton Moor, Flodden Field, and Neville Cross, reply in the negative. A treacherous, malignant, vindictive race. Who betrayed Charles the First?—the beggarly Scotchmen; and they would have betrayed their fathers for the same sum. Who destroyed poor Mary Stuart?—the beggarly Scotchmen; and they would murder their mothers if they thought they could get anything by it. And yet the despicable scoundrels mention England as owing all her glory to them! When did they ever produce a Nelson, a Marlborough, or a Wellington? They boast, too, of monopolizing all the wisdom and genius of the kingdom. Where are their Shakespeares, their Miltons, their Newtons, their Bacons? The only poet they ever had was Burns, and him they starved to death; the scabby, shabby, stingy vermin. And what sort of literawtee do they now possess? A parcel of ignorant, impudent, unprincipled fellows; who pretend to write about feelosophy, and poetry, and the Lord knows what, without being able to compose a sentence of decent grammar; and inundate this country with their trash. The beastly Scotchmen; they have the impudence of the devil! Why, it was but the other day that a vulgar wretch of a journeyman stonemason took it into his head to scribble what he called the Literary History of the last Fifty Years! It would have made a horse laugh to read the superficial twaddling

rubbish the poor wretch published. England owes Scotland for a race of kings the most tyrannical, profligate, and mean that ever disgraced the English throne. She is also indebted to that humane people for the invention of a new species of murder, for the sale of the dead body, called Burking. A set of crouching, canting, unprincipled hypocrites, who come over to this fair country like a swarm of locusts, devouring the very substance of the land, and go spreading their pestilential persons over the whole world; cringing, fawning, flattering, lying their way into wealth and power. Hear a Scotchman speak of his country, you would think he could not exist out of it; and yet, of the thousands who leave it for the more fertile shores of England, scarcely one ever thinks of returning. A swaggering, bragging, drunken crew, who talk of their morality, forsooth! Why, 'tis enough to make an honest stomach heave to hear the lies they tell in their own praise. They boast of their temperate habits, and are known as inveterate dram-drinkers, swilling their filthy throats with their smokey whisky; and will pig on any sort of filth set before them; their haggis and brose would sicken an Englishman. They boast, too, of their feelosophy, and have invented a science called Political Economy—a set of miserable twaddlers, who publish the most mischievous, wicked, and nonsensical opinions on a subject of which they know nothing.

“I said long ago that political economy was a parcel of rubbish, collected by a few revolutionary adventurers for their own profit. I said so, and, like all I say, the truth of my opinion has since been pfoved. Parson Malthus has ceased to gain as many fools as he used to do. I said the humbug would be found out; and I predicted what would be the consequence if Peel's bill became the law of the land. I predicted that the Catholic Emancipation Bill, when passed, would only add to the disturbances and wretchedness of that devoted country, Ireland. I predicted that bank notes would soon be considered old rags, and that every one would strive to possess gold. I predicted a hundred other things of equal importance, and all my predictions were fulfilled to the letter. Have I not saved the country over and over again, when it was on the brink of perdition? and had the government taken my advice, England would now be a fine, flourishing, powerful kingdom, instead of being devoured by

its huge debt, its greedy placemen, and horrible taxation. But the people know what I have done for them; they see that I am the only man capable of setting things to rights; and the king, and all his ministers, will be obliged at last to come cap in hand to me, to pray that I would help them out of the cursed hobble into which their own misgovernment has placed themselves and the nation!

"'Then, in the name o' the deil, who are ye?' asked the affrighted barber, gasping for breath; while the parish apprentice stood with his mouth open, endangering every fly in its immediate neighbourhood; and the black cat raised her back higher than ever, and stared her yellow eyes out of her head.

"'Who am I? you snivelling, snarling, sneaking Scotchman,' repeated the stranger, as with the napkin fixed round his neck he wiped the soap from his chin, 'I'm BILLY GRIDIRON!' Then throwing the cloth at the terrified barber, who, at the mention of his name, had again sunk on the floor, he darted out of the shop."

I laughed heartily at this account of the hero of the Register; for the humour of the story lost nothing in the hands of the narrator. Mephistophiles was the best relater of an anecdote I ever heard. He always threw such a dramatic character into everything he narrated, that the hearer imagined the individuals of whom he was speaking were before him. This is a great art; and I should recommend its study to all diners-out, professed wits, and agreeable fellows.

"Gridiron is a clever fellow," said I, "and I always find entertainment, if not instruction, in his works. Even his very egotism is amusing. His language is the most forcible, natural, and English of the writers of the present day. He is the Defoe of our times. Certainly he is not very choice in his epithets when he becomes abusive; but if he was not vulgar, he would lose his popularity. It is extraordinary how inconsistent he is."

"Who is ever consistent?" asked Mephistophiles. "It is only your obstinate fools who ever possessed a character for consistency. Look at the actions of every man of genius; and if you discover in them anything like consistency, you have more penetration than I should give you credit for."

"Thank you for the compliment," I replied; "but I think

you are right. It is strange, too, how suddenly Gridiron takes a dislike to any person or set of people. He never fails to abuse the inoffensive Scotchmen. A short time since, a member of that harmless race, the Quakers, offended him, and he immediately became their bitterest enemy. He has attacked the Jews, and even the broom-girls, after the same fashion. I should imagine he never felt a warm friendship for any one: but when he does hate, he hates most cordially."

"I like a good hater," said my companion: "there is something honest, manly, and sincere about him. A good hater is what Coleridge would have called a psychological curiosity. It is a rare animal, and ought to be prized as such. Englishmen make poor haters. I am sorry to see all their fine old national antipathies dying away. An Englishman does not hate a Frenchman, a Spaniard, a Scotchman, or an Irishman as he used. The climate appears almost too cold to cultivate that passion to perfection. The best specimens are to be found among more southern and eastern latitudes. The Spaniards hate the Portuguese—the Italians hate the Austrians—the Germans hate the French—the Poles hate the Russians—the Americans hate the English—the Greeks hate the Turks—the Turks, the Franks—the Dutch, the Belgians: in fact, all over the world, except this miserable country, this laudable feeling exists in full force. Not only national hatred, but domestic hatred, universally flourishes. Men cherish it, feed it, and preserve it for generations. Scotland used to boast of her family feuds, and a few lingering embers of the old flame still exist. Ireland may for a long time to come be proud of her factions. England has nothing to be proud of except her political hatreds: and it does one's heart good to observe the cordiality with which a Radical hates a Tory—a Tory, a Whig—and a Whig, both parties: yet the antipathies of these spiritless wretches show themselves in nothing but abuse; except during elections, when a little beer and patriotism excite them to break each other's heads and windows. Religious hatred has always been the most vigorous. How the heathens used to hate the Christians! and how the Christians have hated each other! How delightfully the popes have treated those who doubted their infallibility! What charming persecutions, holy inquisitions, and pleasant

massacres have been created out of regard for religion ! What amiable creatures were Catherine de Medicis and Mary of England ! How piously the Catholics hated the Jews—the Roundheads detested the Cavaliers—the Protestants, the Papists ! and now it still gives me pleasure to observe the sincerity with which an Irish Roman Catholic hates a Protestant—a Scottish Presbyterian curses an Episcopalian—a member of the Church of England scorns a Methodist—a Methodist damns a Quaker—a Quaker denounces a Jew—and a Jew abominates all.”

“A pretty picture you have drawn of human sociality !” said I, laughing. “How it would horrify the ‘greatest-happiness-principle-men,’ the Owenites, the St. Simonians, and all our modern philanthropists !”

“Not at all,” he replied : “they know it, and cannot alter it.”

“What do you consider to be the qualifications of a good hater ?” I asked.

“A good hater,” said Mephistophiles, “must possess a fine, proud, manly spirit—incapable of any act low, mean, or cowardly. He must bear his offence with patience, yet cherish the memory of it with unceasing attention. As long as no opportunity presents itself for the gratification of a sufficient revenge, he must treat his enemy with respect, yet allow no compromise, no explanation, no satisfaction to render him on more friendly terms with the offender. For his enemy and all his race, even to the remotest generation, he must feel nothing but scorn and detestation ; and whenever any member of the family should fall into his power, he should heap upon the guilty wretch all the indignities that his honourable hatred can devise. If his enemy should by the hand of death escape from his vengeance, it is absolutely necessary that it should be transmitted to his successor ; and should old age disable the offended party from seeking in his own person a just retribution, it should be left as a legacy, under pain of eternal curses, to his son or next of kin ; who ought to be, like Hannibal, sworn at the altar in his infancy, to hate his father’s enemies. A good hater should possess the resignation of a martyr, the patience of a Job, and the mildness of an angel, to all outward appearance ; yet he should secretly nourish in his breast a loathing contempt for the person of his foe, a withering scorn

of all his friends and relatives, and a scorching thirst for his blood. These noble feelings ought never to leave him, in sickness or health, in power or poverty, till he hath washed away the offence which created them. But, after all, I think the women are the best haters when they really set their minds to it. Women always, to a certain degree, detest one another; and, when they find good and wholesome cause for hatred, nothing is equal to their sincerity."

"Come, come," said I, interrupting him, "I cannot sit still and hear the dear sex abused. I know nothing of their hatreds; but I am well aware that they are the sweetest, fondest, most loveable creatures in this sublunary world. What a miserable wretch a man would be, deprived of their society! Without their love the earth would seem a desert; and, wanting their smiles, mankind would exist in a state of moral darkness."

"Pooh!" ejaculated my companion, puffing a huge volume of smoke from his mouth. "But it is natural you should fancy so. When you grow older, you will think as I do."

"Never!" I exclaimed with enthusiasm, as I put down my pipe. "What! can the mild, the gentle, the amiable Dora, or the warm, the fond, the devoted Francisca, have felt such an unfeminine passion as hatred? It is impossible!"

"Yet very true," replied Mephistophiles, very coolly.

I had listened to the latter part of his conversation with great uneasiness. It was madness to imagine that she whose thoughts I believed all charity, and whose feelings I considered all love, was a being influenced by vile and inhuman passions. The thought stung me like an adder. I began to feel a dread of my companion. A creeping horror seemed to run through my veins. I doubted and dreaded him. Then my thoughts rushed back upon myself, and I seemed again to see my dear mother, in her dying moments, blessing the guiltless boy that knelt before her, and heard her, with Christian confidence, resign me to the care of those good angels that watch over the innocent and unprotected.

"No, no!" said I, with frantic vehemence. "Take from me all my hopes of immortality—all my expectations of heaven—all that belief of the soul which is a comfort and a joy to the Christian; but leave me with the conviction that

she, for whom I would sacrifice all my joys in the past, the present, and the future, is that pure, exalted, adorable being unto whom I have offered up the worship of a most devoted heart. Let me imagine the temple unpolluted—let me believe the shrine holy; attempt not to sever the last social link that binds a miserable, abandoned wretch to humanity.”

I buried my face in my hands in agony; but a fiendish laugh soon made me look up.

“Are you a man,” said my companion, “that you give way to this girlish weakness? What possesses you? You, a student of philosophy! a disciple of nature! the friend of Mephistophiles! Who would believe it at Göttingen? Show yourself above these weak prejudices. A man like you, who have sought knowledge as a source of government over the ignorant, should never shrink from the truth, though it were unpalatable to you. You are in the right to think as you do in favour of the sex. I also ought to be allowed the privilege of forming an opinion of my own on the subject. Sit you down. We ought not to differ about trifles. Women, save as instruments of pleasure, should not be considered important by a real philosopher. In that light I owe many obligations to the sex, which it is but justice to them to acknowledge. I do acknowledge them. They are glorious creatures in their proper place; and Dora is a delicious, gentle, inspiring being, every way worthy of you.”

“I pray you mention her not!” said I, interrupting him.

“As you please,” he replied; “but it is in my power to ensure you success in that quarter.”

“Ha! in what way?” I exclaimed eagerly, drawing my chair nearer to his.

“That I will prove to your entire satisfaction another time; for the present, fill your meerschaum; and, as the rain continues to pour in torrents, I, to amuse the weary hours, will tell you a remarkable story, having some connection with our recent conversation.”

I did as I was bid, replenished my pipe in silence, and waited for the promised communication.

CHAPTER II.

The story of Mephistophiles.—The sisters of Santa Clara, and the student of Salamanca.—Practical piety in Spain in the last century.—The beauties of the cloisters.—A serenade, and its awful results.

"DURING the pontificate of the most holy father, Urban VIII.," commenced Mephistophiles, as he knocked the ashes out of his pipe, "there existed a convent near Seville, which, according to general report, had not its equal in the world for the beauty or the sanctity of its inmates. The nuns were four-and-twenty in number, and were related to the most powerful families in Spain. The abbess was a younger daughter of the noble Duke de Medina Sidonia, one of his most Catholic majesty's privy council. At the early age of nineteen, she retired from the world disgusted; some said with its follies, but, as others reported, with far more probability, out of temper with mankind, her *amante* having recently deserted her. However, let that be as it will, she had sufficient influence to persuade four-and-twenty of her companions, the choicest beauties of the court, to form a nunnery, of which they made her lady abbess. They retired to a pleasant mansion, on the right bank of the Guadalquivir. It was a charming spot. The house, which had been built a few miles from the city, was surrounded by orange and lemon groves; an excellent garden, clumps of magnificent chestnuts, and a large vineyard of very superior grapes, also belonged to the establishment. Flowers and fruits grew in luxuriance; and the scenery around—hill, valley, sea, and sky—was of the most interesting character. It was by far the most picturesque part of that neighbourhood; for, from St. Lucar to Cadiz, the land is quite flat. The place had long been the residence of a certain Don Francisco de Montano, a profligate grandee, who, having squandered all his property, went to the wars, and there got killed. His wife soon followed. What became of his only child, no one knew, and just as many cared. A penniless orphan is seldom an object of much consideration. Dona

Mariana bought the mansion ; had the chambers transformed into neat little cells, appropriately fitted up for the use of the sisterhood ; had a chapel erected ; and, by her direction, the mansion soon became the most perfect little convent in all Spain.

“It was arranged by the ladies, that they should serve their novitiate at a convent in Seville ; and the usual time having expired, there they all took the veil. It was a magnificent ceremony. The king, with the officers of his court, and ecclesiastics of every degree, attended by the queen, her maids of honour, and a great portion of the nobility, honoured the magnificent cathedral with their presence on that important occasion. Such a day for the priests, who swarm in Seville, had not been known for a long time. Every *caballero* in the city, and many from the provinces, and from the towns of Xeres, St. Lucar, Malaga, and Cadiz, came to take a last look at the beautiful recluses. Sad was the commotion among several *amantes* who were attached to these novices ; they thought—the sacrilegious wretches !—that women had no occasion to be saints unless they were either old or ugly, and a plan was laid forcibly to carry off their charmers from the convent. Their designs, however, were as fruitless as their regrets : the priests always take good care of their own. On the appointed day the bells rung, the monks chanted, relics were exhibited, miracles performed ; and a splendid procession of the saints, martyrs, and angels, with all their pious paraphernalia, paraded through the streets with wonderful éclat. A few singular accidents occurred during the procession, which I may as well relate here. By some strange oversight, the female who represented the Virgin Mary (the youthful buxom wife of a vinedresser) was taken with the pains of labour during the procession ; and, nature kindly assisting her, she gave birth to a thumping boy. This unexpected incident caused the priests some little embarrassment at first ; but they wisely gave it out as the result of a miracle ; and the populace, shouting with all their might, made the prolific Maria the idol of the day. It was lucky for the good fathers that they had so easily procured a representative of the infant Saviour ; for the one at first engaged to perform that character, a sturdy lad of ten years of age, had managed to bring his mouth in contact with a bottle of sacramental wine, and be-

fore he had got half-way to the place of meeting, he was discovered to be roaring drunk, with his crown of glory crushed to pieces, and his splendidly embroidered robe soiled with dust, and covered with the purple stains of the generous liquor he had so liberally quaffed. St. Peter and St. Paul, two mule-drivers, quarrelled on the road about the superior merits of their favourite beasts ; and, after damning each other in the purest Andalusian, began to knock one another about in the most apostolic fashion, tearing off each other's crowns, and rolling in the mud, to the infinite diversion of the profane.

" But these little flaws were not considered worthy of a good man's attention. Some ill-natured people, out of the hearing of the inquisition, did make some invidious remarks upon the very strange occurrences which took place ; but I am the last person in the world to encourage a love of finding fault, especially when directed to subjects of so sacred a nature as to those to which I have alluded. With these trifling exceptions, everything connected with the proceedings of that eventful day, a day long remembered by the *duennas* and *cortejos* of Seville, went off with the utmost decorum. The young ladies cast away all that connected them with the vain and wicked world, resolving, for the future, to banish every idea of earthly pleasures, and to become the spouses of the church. A short time after the ceremony, they took possession of their new residence.

" Time passed on, and the Conventa Santa Clara became famous all over Catholic Europe. The extraordinary sanctity of the sisters, their splendid embroidery, and unrivalled preserves, were the theme of every tongue. Anything in the shape of a man was never seen within the convent walls, unless the confessor of the convent, old Father Geronimo, a brother of the neighbouring monastery of Franciscans, who, at stated intervals, came by invitation to confess the sisters, might be considered such. But he, poor wretch, offered them no temptation. He was exceedingly old, exceedingly ugly, exceedingly stout, and exceedingly morose ; I might add, exceedingly stupid. However, his office was a very easy one. He trotted to the convent gates, hobbled into the confessional, listened as well as he could to their minute details of inoffensive actions, ordered them a slight

penance, and gave them a long lecture, took some refreshment, and then trotted home again.

“Now the fame of these beautiful nuns had reached Salamanca, where a young student of divinity, who was preparing for immediate admission into the bosom of the church, was pursuing his studies. He was handsome, full of spirit, fire, and genius. Look at him, and you would say that the sword became him better than the crosier—that he would sing a *canto-amoroso* with more emphasis than he could chant an “ave,” and that he looked better on an Andalusian barb than by a collegiate altar. Nevertheless Don Francisco was destined for the church; and having no other friend or relative than his old uncle, the Archbishop of Seville, he saw that if he wished for a decent existence, he must become an ecclesiastic. So Don Francisco studied with more vigour than good-will, became a cura, afterward a prebendado, and received some honours for the abilities he had evinced. His superiors were delighted with him; the ladies were charmed with him; and not a person ever spoke against him an ill word. In time he became a canon; yet, in spite of his divinity honours, rumours of these lovely recluses troubled him much. When he ought to have been studying the fathers, his thoughts were frequently directed towards the sisters; and while he should have been considering the interest of the church, his imagination found more interest in pondering over the attractions of the convent.

“It is not a little singular that your studious young men are the most easily influenced by female charms. The less they have mingled in the society of women, and often when they are almost completely deprived of such enjoyment, the more powerfully does a pretty face act upon them. If your student is an imaginative man, Heaven help him! A description is sufficient to set him in a flame; and, with the most distant prospect of success, he will fancy himself desperately in love. But of all students I have always found the most easily enamoured, are your young ecclesiastics, particularly after they have taken the vow of chastity. The more they apply themselves to theology, the more they mortify the flesh and punish the bowels; the more frequently does the heart rise up in judgment against the hypocrisy. A pair of bright eyes will prove, in a moment, that there are more divinities than one; a smile will upset a thousand

rows ; and as the fair senora has generally a generous disposition, the touch of her lips will send all thoughts of theology—"

"To the devil!" said I, interrupting him.

"Not so," replied Mephistophiles ; "he has long ceased to find any use for them. The young saint, as he ought to do, will make a present of them to the church ; the rubicon once passed, nothing stops him. If he is discreet, he will meet with sufficient opportunities for pleasing himself. A great inducement for young men to enter a monastery at that time, lay in the knowledge, that a religious life of celibacy was greatly to be preferred to any other kind of existence. Women, who are always superior in wisdom in whatever concerns themselves, knew that they were safe with men who had sworn to lead a chaste and holy life ; and as every woman required a spiritual adviser, the piety that was inculcated among the sex, though it sometimes brought forth unwelcome and unnecessary fruits, greatly increased the influence of the church. Don Francisco was well aware of these facts, and the knowledge of them reconciled him in a great measure to the life his uncle, the archbishop, had determined he should pursue. The beauty of the Abadessa Mariana was continually the object of his thoughts ; he had managed to get possession of a miniature of her, which had been executed by an artist of celebrity when she was the idol of fashion ; and with this he feasted his eyes, his heart, and his soul. He wore it affixed to a gold chain near his breast ; and whenever he was alone,—and he took care that he should be pretty frequently,—he talked to it, kissed it, declared his adoration, wrote verses in honour of the original, and played all those pranks which an *enfermedad amoroso* usually exhibits. In short, the little rosy god was playing the deuce with him ; he ate nothing, drank nothing, slept nothing. Instead of composing pious homilies, he wrote amorous songs ; when he ought to have been illuminating his missal, an accomplishment for which he had become celebrated, he was singing to his guitar, also an accomplishment in which he greatly excelled ; and the time he should have spent in counting his beads, saying his prayers, and performing the usual ceremonies prescribed by the church for the use of its members, he passed in devising plans, laying plots, and considering the dangers and dif-

difficulties that lay in the way of an interview with his mistress. About this time he received an affectionate letter from his uncle, recalling him to Seville; and, after bidding adieu to his college associates, the canon Francisco left Salamanca, and proceeded on his journey.

"Now, our sisters of Santa Clara became a blessing to all the country round. The prayers of no holy community ever produced such a beneficial effect as those of the youthful nuns; and numberless were the applications at the gate to be benefited by them. The sisterhood were most liberal in their presents of wine and medicine to the sick. If the truth must be told, it was not all who wanted medicine that went for wine. Their lives were most exemplary. It is easy, though, to live in a state of innocence when there is no temptation to sin; and, having completely severed themselves from the world and all its enjoyments, the only thing the nuns had to do was, to endeavour to live affectionately among themselves, and to give up their thoughts entirely to spiritual communications. If we are to believe a cynical philosopher, who argued against the possibility of an armed community of women living together like the Amazons, because nothing would prevent them turning their weapons against each other, las señoras would have found some difficulty in the first of these obligations; but though a little trifling difference was created now and then, they existed in as perfect a state of sociality as it was possible for them to enjoy under those circumstances. And, as for their thoughts, occasionally the mind would stray to feed upon those associations of ideas which told of past felicities; yet fully convinced of the impossibility of going back to such enjoyments, they would return to their quiet avocations with as little regret as possible.

"One evening as the moon was shining with all her accustomed brilliancy, lighting up with a silver radiance the starry heavens, the vernal groves, the quiet hills, the flowing river, and giving a sort of distinctness to the shadowy outline of the different buildings in the distant city, some of the sisters were walking in the garden; perhaps to listen to the nightingale, to enjoy the fragrance of the orange blossom, or to breathe the quiet air. Two of them were walking apart beneath some lofty chestnuts. They were inseparables. Whatever Sister Margarita did, Sister Teresa would

do also. They read the same books, worked at the same work, said the same prayers, told each other their secrets—poor things! little that might be called secret had they to tell—and laughed and wept, just according as the other felt inclined. Never was such a friendship known; it was the admiration of all the *hermandad*. Yet nothing was more evident than the contrast in the appearance of the two nuns. Margarita was tall and majestic, fair as Carrara marble—melancholy and quiet. She moved like a swan upon the waters. Teresa was a little below the medium height; plump as a young partridge, and brown as a berry: the latter evidently from a tinge of Morisco blood in her veins. She was full of spirit and gayety—an enthusiast—a thing of life and impulse—a creature all smiles and sunshine. She sported about like a playful fawn. There was the same difference in their family connections. Sister Margarita was the daughter of la Senora Condesa de Florida Blanca; Sister Teresa was only niece to the widow of a deceased corregidor. But they had been playmates from childhood, and the presence of one was now necessary to the other's existence.

“‘Sister Margarita,’ said her light-hearted companion in a whisper, ‘last night, just before I was going to sleep, as I was saying my credo, do you know I heard the sound of a guitar?’

“‘Nonsense, child,’ replied the other; ‘you must have been asleep, and dreaming.’

“‘No, sister,’ continued Teresa, ‘I was not asleep; and if I had, I had long ceased to dream of guitars. But although it was very sinful, I could not help listening, it sounded so pleasant and refreshing. It reminded me, too, so very much of the time when the handsome Senor Don Narciso de Matallanas used to come and serenade you under your balcony, while I took your amiable duenna into the garden to find herbs to make an embrocation for her rheumatism, and—’

“‘How often,’ said Margarita, gravely interrupting her, ‘have I told you, Sister Teresa, never to allude to circumstances connected with our worldly and sinful lives! In our present situation, all mention of such vain and frivolous pursuits as we followed in our earlier youth is a great sin—a very great sin—and you have transgressed heavily.’

“ ‘I am sure I did not think there was any harm in it,’ replied her volatile companion, the tear half starting into her eyes. ‘But, indeed, he sang and played so sweetly that the blessed St. Clara herself would have listened to him.’

“ ‘Was it a man, then?’ inquired the other, stopping suddenly, as if shocked at the very supposition. ‘The abandoned wretch!’

“ ‘Oh, yes, I’m sure it was a caballero,’ Teresa answered, with an air of mystery. ‘The song was all about love; and the voice was so soft and so rich, so like the voice of a handsome cavalier, I am certain it must have been caused by some poor young nobleman, or gallant militarío. I wonder whether he is an accepted cortejo, or pursues one who is indifferent to him. The air was of rather a melancholy character, too much so to make me imagine that the singer was happy. Poor youth! I am always so sorry to hear of any person being wretched, and I am sure he must be very miserable. I wish I could make him happy. It is a Christian duty to relieve the sufferings of the afflicted—an obligation, the necessity of our observing which the abbess particularly enjoins; and there is nothing so pleasant, when we have it in our power, as alleviating the distresses of our fellow-creatures. I am sure the world would not be so wicked if everybody in it was happy. But here are Sister Julia and Sister Ana coming; let us hear what they have to say on the subject.’

“How far Sister Teresa might have run on, had not two of the nuns made their appearance, there is no knowing; for her companion was too intently occupied by her own thoughts to attend to anything else; and the pretty gossip, if unchecked, would rattle on till she fell asleep. The allusion to Don Narciso had, in spite of her superior piety, recalled recollections to the memory of Sister Margarita most precious—of hours she had vainly endeavoured to forget. She tried to stem the current of her thoughts; but they had ventured into a whirlpool, and they soon sank into the depths of the past. Her bosom swelled; feelings long a stranger to her again asserted their influence; and she turned to wipe away from her cheeks the tears that had rushed unbidden into her eyes.

“ ‘Sister Ana!’ exclaimed Teresa, with her usual vivacity,

‘what is your opinion of the music that was heard last night?’ Then, without stopping for a reply, she continued, ‘I have been telling Sister Margarita that I am convinced it proceeded from some unfortunate young gentleman, whose affections have been cast away upon an obdurate senorita. But what do you think of it?’

“Sister Ana was meek as an angel. Her words were few, and were always spoken in a whisper. Her large blue eyes admirably expressed the sleepiness of her disposition.

“‘I do not know, Sister Teresa,’ murmured Sister Ana.

“‘Are you not of the same opinion with me, Sister Julia, about the young gentleman?’ asked the inquisitive Teresa.

“‘I do not think it was a young gentlemen,’ gravely replied the nun. Sister Julia was very pretty and very superstitious, exceedingly credulous and remarkably simple. Every strange noise she heard she believed to be supernatural, and nothing extraordinary occurred which she was not convinced was the agency of a spirit.

“‘Then what do you think it was?’ inquired her interrogator, with considerable emphasis.

“‘From all I have heard concerning the history of this building and its former inhabitants,’ replied the other, with an air of great mystery, ‘I feel satisfied in my own mind that the noise we heard was occasioned by some unhappy spirit lamenting over the scene of its former pleasures or sufferings.’

“‘Holy mother forbid!’ exclaimed Sister Teresa, in unfeigned alarm, creeping nearer to the rest. ‘What will become of us? The blessed saints watch over us! I am sure I shall not be able to sleep a wink for thinking of it.’ She crossed herself, and applied to her rosary with much earnestness.

“‘Hush!’ said Sister Ana, in a whisper. They were all as silent as the grave. A symphony of a sweet and melancholy character seemed to come floating on the air, apparently proceeding from their immediate neighbourhood. The sisters thronged to the spot—some alarmed, some delighted, some wondering, all surprised. Not a word was spoken. Pleasantly the air changed; and, with a lively and spirited accompaniment, a rich manly voice was heard to sing the following stanzas:—

BALADA AMOROSO.

"To the hum of the flowing waters
 A cavalier
 Called on one of earth's fairest daughters
 His song to hear.
 Ere his voice had fulfilled its duty,
 He heard a sigh,
 And a lady of peerless beauty
 Stood list'ning by.
 His lute's sweet chords through air were ringing,
 While he in joy this strain was singing,
 'Flow on, flow on, thou golden river!
 Flow on, thou shining Guadalquiver!'

"In her eyes the fond youth is gazing
 His soul away;
 To his mouth her white hand is raising,
 In loving play;
 And the maid, though from him, offended,
 Her palm she slips,
 Only blushed when the kiss came mended
 Upon her lips.
 Again the lute's sweet chords were ringing,
 Again in joy this strain was singing,
 'Flow on, flow on, thou golden river!
 Flow on, thou happy Guadalquiver!'

"Then the hope of his dreams were uttered
 With wild delight;
 And her heart in its bondage fluttered,
 And then took flight:
 Long she lay, without thought of moving,
 Upon his breast;
 And all those who have souls for loving,
 May guess the rest.
 Once more the lute's sweet chords were ringing,
 While maid and youth in joy were singing,
 'Flow on, flow on, thou golden river!
 Flow on, thou blessed Guadalquiver!'"

"The music ceased, but the silence continued. Even the nightingale, which a moment before had been tuning her voice to the sweetest melody, had ceased her song. The note of the langostino was alone heard coming at intervals with the sigh of the wind among the olive-trees; but that appeared more subdued than usual. The sisters remained mute for a few seconds, as if not daring to trust their tongues.

" 'I wonder who it can be?' whispered Sister Viola. Sister Viola was of an inquisitive disposition.

" 'I think it must be a man,' replied Sister Juana; 'I wish I could see him.' And Sister Juana, who had been a great coquette, stretched her pretty neck, and glanced her bright hazel eyes in every direction.

" 'I am surprised to hear you talk so imprudently,' said Sister Dorotea to the last speaker. 'It is a great sin to have a man in your thoughts.' Sister Dorotea was a prude.

" 'It appeared to come from the cork-tree; and I have no doubt in the world that there is some person hid in the branches,' said Sister Maria, who was considered, by herself particularly, clever at finding out what no one else could discover.

" 'What can anybody want there?' inquired Sister Clara, rather earnestly.

" 'No good, I should imagine,' sharply replied Sister Ester, who was accounted very ill-natured. 'People don't sit in cork-trees and sing love-songs without some object.'

" 'Perhaps 'tis a brigand attempting to decoy the unwary traveller,' remarked Sister Victoria.

" 'He sings very sweetly,' said Sister Rosa, with a sigh.

" 'And it was a pretty song,' added Sister Olivia with another.

" 'I dare say he's serenading one of us!' exclaimed Sister Barbara with much simplicity.

" Her supposition was met on the part of the sisters with exclamations of horror and amazement, that so sacrilegious a thing could be imagined. But none of them moved from the spot. Indeed, the nuns, though they did not confess it, were well pleased with the song and the singer. Many said nothing, but their feelings had been powerfully awakened. Among these was Sister Inez. Sister Inez far exceeded the rest in personal loveliness, and even by some might have been preferred to the abbess. Her rich blue eyes, swimming in a world of light, seemed to melt the heart of the gazer. Her complexion was so radiant, her smile was so entrancing; and her mouth, even when her lips were closed, appeared to speak volumes of the most subduing love. Her figure was faultless in its symmetry,—its graces fully developed, its beauty exquisitely expressed.

None could see her without loving her,—none could love her without being madly and passionately enamoured. Her story was rather a sad one. She was beloved by el Senor Don Esteban de Villa Torre y Ceuta, and returned his affection with equal ardour. He was a young officer in his majesty's guards; and was killed in an ambuscade by the enemy, a month before the day which had been fixed for their nuptials. Of course Dona Inez was inconsolable; and although her mother, la Senora Marquesa de Torrillo, affectionately told her that other lovers might be procured, she gave way to her grief, and retired into the convent. Since she had become a nun she had, till recently, seldom been seen to laugh; but, as the proverb says, 'constant dropping will wear away stone:' her tears began to fall less frequently—soon ceased altogether; her eyes assumed their original brightness, her smile wore the same fascination. She became resigned, thought it was sinful to think of Don Esteban, and sometimes half regretted that she had entered the convent. With the young, sorrow will always wear itself out; and when, by its natural elasticity, the mind returns to its usual cheerful position, it becomes the more susceptible of pleasant impressions. Sister Inez felt this as she listened to the song of the concealed minstrel, and thought how happy she could once have been had a handsome cavalier sung to her so charming a song. She sighed, and walked away to hide her emotion. The others continued, in an under tone, to express their suppositions as to the cause of the music.

"Who can it be?" inquired Sister Teresa, her alarm having subsided.

"It is a ghost," replied Sister Julia.

"It is a caballero," said Sister Juana.

"It is very strange," exclaimed Sister Maria.

"It is very improper," remarked Sister Dorotea.

"It is very pretty," whispered Sister Rosa.

"Hush!" said Sister Clara, "here comes the superior."

"Under a rich canopy of orange-trees, the lady abbess was seen approaching the sisters. There was something in her appearance, even to be observed at a distance, that would command respect and admiration. She was tall; but her person was so well proportioned, that nothing could be taken from, or added to it, without injury to its perfect beauty.

Her glossy hair was parted from the centre of her forehead, and carried in broad bands behind her small and delicate ears. Over her hair was the simple, yet not ungraceful cap (if cap it might be called, for it more resembled a veil) of the order, differing, in a slight degree, from that worn by the rest of the sisters. Her eyes were of the darkest hue—lustrous as fire, shaded by long silken lashes, that appeared like those small fleecy clouds that often sport around the sun. Her complexion was of the richest nature, where crimson diffused itself over the cheek like the tints in some luscious pomegranate; and her mouth, eloquent with meaning, appeared like some floral treasure bursting into rosy beauty. Her shoulders were rounded into a shape that realized the most perfect conception of womanly grace; and every limb seemed to express all that the mind of an enraptured lover ever imagined of the most exquisite loveliness in the being he adored. Her dress did not in the least lessen her personal attractions; its very simplicity rather served to heighten them. The only addition she had made to the costume of the sisters, was a sort of crimson scarf, worn over the shoulders, hiding a portion of the scapulaire and the gimpe, and a golden crucifix appended to her rosary. In the court of King Philip the Fourth, Dona Mariana and Dona Inez had been rival beauties. The flashing glances from the proud gaze of one commanded admiration; the melting fondness in the sweet looks of the other won love. There was also a striking difference in their dispositions: one was impetuous, imperious, and distant; the other was gentle, affectionate, and generous. Just as the abbess approached her nuns the music recommenced. She stopped, and heard the following stanzas sung with all the emphasis which love and melody could produce:—

SERENATA.

“ Must I still in vain adore thee,
 Mariana!
 Still with love’s found pray’rs implore thee,
 Mariana!
 Thou canst ne’er have cause to fear me;
 Yet, my life! thou com’st not near me.
 Oh! if thou hast pity, hear me,
 Mariana!

"In yon bow'r the rose-tree bloweth,
Mariana!

And for her the sunbeam gloweth,
Mariana!

I would be, ere hope reposes,
To thy love till Love's day closes,
All the sun is to the roses,
Mariana!

"From my thoughts thou goest never,
Mariana!

In my dreams I find thee ever,
Mariana!

Say thou lov'st me, none shall doubt thee;
Smile, and all shall shine about thee!
Oh! I cannot live without thee,
Mariana!"

"The singer became silent. All the sisters were more or less affected, but at the commencement of the song the abbess appeared as if under the influence of some powerful spell. Thick-coming blushes gave a richer crimson to her blooming cheek; and, as the singer proceeded, her eyes rained from beneath their fringed curtains warm and radiant beams. Her lips were closely pressed together, her breast heaved tumultuously, and, till some minutes after the tones had died away, she stood like one entranced, storing in her memory the sentiments and sounds she had heard. She made a violent effort to recover her composure.

"'What is this?' exclaimed the abbess, her dark eyes flashing indignation; 'who dares put this insult upon our house? Holy mother, what sacrilege! what profanation! what impiety! The alcalde must hear of it. It is matter for the cognizance of the holy tribunal!' Then turning to the terrified nuns, who were devoutly crossing themselves at the mention of the dreaded power, she said, 'Daughters, 'tis time for prayers; follow me into the chapel.'

"When the sisters afterward met in the refectory, a few made remarks upon the extraordinary circumstance which had recently taken place; but the more discreet were silent. The allusion to the inquisition placed a padlock on their tongues. In this mood they were summoned by a request from the abbess to attend her in her chamber. They found her sitting at her table, her work thrown aside, with two open letters before her.

“‘I have sent for you, sisters of Santa Clara,’ said the abbess, motioning the nuns to be seated, ‘to acquaint you with an important circumstance which has just come under my attention. I have this afternoon received a letter from my most reverend brother, the Archbishop of Seville, requesting my attendance, as the superior of this convent, at a council by which is to be tried a nun, a wretched sister of the order of St. Ursula, who has broken her vow of chastity.’ (The sisters looked shocked.) ‘This is the first unpleasant situation in which I have been placed since I possessed the sacred office I hold; but the Mother of Mercies will, I trust, guide me in this trying part of my duty. I leave the convent in three days.’ The sisters took out their pocket handkerchiefs. ‘But I shall return the same day.’ The sisters put them back again. ‘I have also received a letter requesting me to take, as a parlour boarder, a young lady of a good family, who is desirous of entering into our blessed community. Upon due consideration I have thought proper to return a favourable answer to the last communication; and, as the young lady is a cousin of Sister Rosa’s, I shall, for the present, allow her to be entirely placed under her care, having the fullest confidence in her moral and intellectual qualifications. La Senorita Batista de Vedras is, I hear, young, and of a pious disposition. Heaven grant she may become an ornament to the church! I expect her very shortly.’ The nuns received the blessing of their superior, and soon afterward retired to rest.”

CHAPTER III.

The story of Mephistophiles continued.—The condemned nun.—A caution to ladies who are apt to faint.—A picturesque scene described.—The abbess in danger, and a hero overpowered, showing to what little benefit merchants' sons seek adventures clandestinely.—The captor and the captive drink together, and the powerful effects of wine and music fully developed.—The use of niggers and triggers.

“On the morning of the day appointed for the Abbess of Santa Clara to meet the archbishop and the other members of the council, at Seville, there was great tribulation at the convent. The sisters had never before been separated from their superior ; and when, after wrapping herself closely in her mantillo and veil, she mounted her mule, she was accompanied by the prayers of all the community. While the abbess approached the city by the Ponta Triana, she was conscious of an individual hovering around her ; but as his person was enveloped in a capacious cloak, she had no means of ascertaining who or what he was. All she could see was, a pair of piercing black eyes continually fixed upon herself. He walked sometimes before her, and sometimes behind her, and frequently took up a station near her side. Had not the behaviour of the stranger been marked with great respect, she might have been alarmed ; but there was something in his manner more likely to excite curiosity than fear. She did not appear to take any notice of him, yet could not help wondering at the cause which could induce any person to act so strangely. Soon after they entered the town she lost sight of him ; and, as she shortly afterward arrived at the archbishop's palace, she thought no more of the circumstance.

“The Archbishop of Seville was a venerable little ecclesiastic, somewhere about sixty, with a face expressive of good-humour, good wine, and good living. He had been rather gay in his youth ; but that did not, as it frequently does with others, transform him into a severe moralist, making no allowances for the gayeties of the young. The

greater portion of his affection was centred in his nephew, the young canon ; the rest dwelt upon the enjoyments of life within his command, of which he never stinted himself : yet he was benevolent, as religious as he could be, did as much good as lay within his power, and perpetrated as little mischief as possible. Dressed in his best robes, he received the Abbess of Santa Clara ; and, after a mutual interchange of compliments, led her into the council-chamber, where she was introduced to the abbess of the convent of St. Ursula, a sharp-visaged old woman, with whom, it was evident, the unfortunate culprit had no chance—to the abbot of the monastery of Black Friars, a furious bigot—and to the reverendisimo Padre Atanasio, a doctor of the college of Jesuits, and a member of the Holy Tribunal : these, with the archbishop and herself, formed the council. The young canon, Francisco, had been invited to attend, but he had excused himself on the score of indisposition ; and as five members were legally considered a sufficient council, they commenced proceedings without his assistance. As the spiritual superior of the assembly, the archbishop took the chair.

“ Prayers having been read, the Abbess of St. Ursula proceeded to explain to the council the object for which they had been assembled. A sister of her convent, she regretted to say, although it was scarcely a twelvemonth since she had taken the veil, had forgotten the vows she had made to lead a life of chastity, and the sacred character of the community to which she belonged, and was discovered in a situation which left no doubt of her guilt. Sister Jacintha was called : a woman of fine and intellectual features, with a complexion pale as marble, was then introduced into the room. She appeared half dead with fear. She was asked what had induced her to commit so gross a sacrilege, and so deadly a sin. She attempted no palliation—she commenced no defence. Her eyes were fixed upon the ground, and her appearance was of one who had given herself up to despair. She had not courage to say that the vows had been forced from her, and that in the result which followed nature had only asserted her privileges ; but it would have been of little service to her if she had done so. Her judges and accusers were the same persons. They knew that a crime had been committed : she knew that the punishment must

follow. She was led out of the room, and immediately afterward the abbot rose and expressed his conviction of her guilt, and the necessity there was, to prevent others from falling into the same path of damnable wickedness, to make a fearful and terrible example. Father Atanasio expressed similar sentiments; and added, that he considered the holy church in manifest peril from the weakness and sinfulness of its members, and that it was absolutely necessary to maintain its purity by sentencing the criminal to the punishment provided by the church for such offences. The good archbishop said nothing, but he found his situation very uncomfortable. The Abbess of Santa Clara wept. She had still the heart of a woman, and in it some sympathies for her erring sister. The votes were taken, and the culprit was condemned to death. Sister Jacintha was once more led into the room, and heard her doom pronounced. A slight quivering of the muscles of her body was all that expressed her knowledge of the fatal sentence. The Abbess of Santa Clara fainted as the criminal was led out to prepare for the immediate execution of her sentence—the abbot frowned at this display of weakness—the Padre Atanasio sneered—the archbishop was alarmed—and the old abbess (for fanaticism had not yet in her extinguished every feminine feeling) hastened to render the necessary assistance. She was borne into another chamber; and, after the old lady had left her, she awoke to consciousness.

“When she recovered there was an impression on her mind that, during the time she had been left to herself, a young and handsome ecclesiastic, with fine dark eyes, had stood gazing at her for a few seconds, and after having imprinted a hurried kiss upon her lips had hastened away. She, however, quickly dismissed the idea, as the creation of fancy, and proceeded to make preparations for her return. Although the good archbishop, who seemed much pleased with her appearance, offered to send an escort with her, she would insist on returning alone; and having mounted her mule, she rode in the direction of the convent, very ill-satisfied with the result of her journey.

“The day had far advanced. The sun, in the full blaze of his glory, was setting behind the western hills. As far as the eye could reach the sky appeared lit up with a golden flame; tints of orange, of purple, of azure, fringed with

light fleecy clouds of the most snowy whiteness, gave a beauty to the heavens, which exceeded the brilliance of the most costly canopy that had ever been created to show the magnificence of an eastern emperor. The bright god of day, as if unwilling to lose sight of those beauties on which he had smiled since the morning, seemed to linger on the mountains, gathering around him his robe of splendour, and casting many a fond and anxious glance upon the fertile valleys beneath. Nothing could be more beautiful than the landscape. The suburban gardens were disclosing their treasures of flower and fruit. The orange-trees bore a luxuriant crop of the golden gifts, and the boughs of the lemon appeared to be equally well filled. The fig-trees seemed to tempt the hand. The vineyards showed a rich and abundant harvest, for the grapes were hanging in large clusters of amber and purple, covered with their delicate bloom, and surrounded by their prettily formed leaves; the verdure of which had become tinted with warmer colours from the repeated presence of the sunbeams. Farther on, were plantations of olives, groups of chestnuts, and orchards of various fruits; beyond which the yellow corn-fields spread far and wide their precious stores of animal provision. To the right appeared the distant Morena, with its mountains clothed in rich and varied hues till their tops were lost in the clouds. On the left lay the Atlantic, stretching its mighty bosom for miles, till it appeared to mingle with the horizon: here the Guadalquiver flowed, spreading beauty and verdure along its banks. In the distance some little specks, seemingly birds upon the wave, told of ships afar off; while in the Bay of Cadiz, almost every description of vessel, from the heavy ship of war to the light craft of the fisherman, were riding at anchor, or sailing into the shore.

“A group of fishermen on the banks of the river were watching the progress of a distant mystico. In an adjoining field a party of merry vine-dressers were amusing themselves; the young maidens, in their holyday dress, were dancing to the inspiring notes of the guitar, played by a handsome peasant, dressed with more than usual neatness, whose brilliant eyes followed the motions of the dancers with evident admiration. The old men sat drinking at a short distance. To the same measure their companions sung—

“THE SONG OF THE VINE-DRESSERS.

“Dance! girls, dance! for youth will not last,
 And beauty, like sunset, is rapidly pass'd;
 There is bliss in your smile, there is love in your glance,
 There is grace in your footsteps, and joy in your dance.
 Why bend your dark heads? why wave your fair arms?
 To whose honour display ye those eloquent charms?
 'To the tree whose dear leaves in our hair we entwine—
 We dance to the vine! we dance to the vine!’

“Sing! boys, sing! for life's not too long;
 And while bliss crowns the dance, there is joy in the song.
 Ah! those fond melting looks make your young hearts rejoice,
 And throw, in a moment, the soul in the voice.
 Why breathe the sweet verse? why touch the gay string?
 Of whose worth do ye play? in whose praise do ye sing?
 'To the grape, on whose clusters the sun loves to shine:
 We sing to the vine! we sing to the vine!’

“Drink! men, drink! for age should not shrink;
 Boys and girls, dance and sing; but, old men, ye should drink!
 And should death ever threaten to swallow ye up,
 You may laugh at the cheat—there's new life in the cup!
 Why raise the bright flask? why, men, have ye laughed?
 In whose name are ye pledging the joy-giving draught?
 'To the nectar of gods! to the rosy-red wine!
 We drink to the vine! we drink to the vine!’”

“The song had scarcely concluded when the bells in the town were heard ringing for vespers. In an instant all the merry party were on their knees; the old and the young, the drinkers, the dancers, and the singers, all joined their voices in—

“THE VESPER HYMN TO THE VIRGIN.

“Ave Maria! virgin blest!
 Of all saints the purest, best!
 Be our sinful souls thy care,
 And in mercy hear our pray'r.
 Ave Maria!

“Ave Maria! mother mild!
 By the glory of thy Child,
 Let the sins this day may claim
 Be forgiven in thy name.
 Ave Maria!

"Ave Maria! kind and good!
By thy Son's most precious blood,
From our hearts all ill remove,
While our voices breathe our love,
Ave Maria!"

"She heard the sounds dying away in the distance; and after offering up her prayers to the same shrine, the abbess hastened on her way, at least hurried on as fast as she could persuade her mule to go; but the animal, a well-fed and indolent beast, was never known to alter his pace, which was of the slowest. It was, however, time to hasten, for the sun had set, and the shadows of the coming night appeared settling round the distant hills. She paused to take one view of the scene around her.

"It was a landscape worthy of admiration: wild and beautiful, sublime and picturesque. The Abbess of Santa Clara thought she had seen nothing so beautiful; and as she breathed the delicious fragrance of the air, her indisposition seemed entirely to leave her. She passed on. Her thoughts then took a hasty survey of the recent occurrences. The concealed minstrel and his song had made a powerful impression upon her mind, and had awakened feelings in her heart which she thought ought to have slept for ever. She had threatened the unknown with the alcalde and the sacred tribunal; but she had mentioned him to neither. The conduct of the cloaked cavalier, she also thought, was exceedingly strange. Then she could not erase the conviction from her mind that during the time she lay in a chamber in the archbishop's palace in a state of half-consciousness, a handsome ecclesiastic had pressed his lips to her own. The state of the poor nun then interested her thoughts. She was reflecting upon the unhappy destiny of the unfortunate sister, when her progress was stopped; and two armed men, dressed half like fishermen, and half like brigands, forcibly laid hold of her, and commanded her, with a rude oath, to dismount. She was proceeding to expostulate with them, and was threatening them with the thunders of the church, for daring to impede the progress of one of its members, when she felt herself suddenly and forcibly lifted off her mule. The abbess screamed. A cavalier of a commanding figure leaped from a neighbouring thicket of algarobos, with his rapier drawn: he quickly disabled one of

the ruffians, and commenced a brisk attack upon the other ; but the combat had not continued many seconds before he felt his arms pinioned behind him. He was immediately disarmed, and his eyes were bound with a handkerchief ; then he was placed on a horse, before one of the brigands ; the lady was similarly seated ; and the party, consisting of six horsemen, well armed and mounted, galloped off in the direction of the Sierra Morena.

“ The men by whom the abbess had been attacked were a portion of the band led by the famous Padre Salvador. This bandit was originally of a good family in Valentia ; his father was an alguazil, by name Garcia Pedrillo ; and, like an honest man, he brought up his son to the church. But Salvador had been born a picaroon, for he was always of a roving, vagabond disposition ; had no mind for learning, no stomach for fasting ; and for religion he cared not a fig. So, shortly after he had been invested with the cowl, he gave his monastery the slip, commenced a wandering tour of the provinces, begged his way along, and what he couldn't beg he stole. He then joined some banditti ; but their exploits having attracted the attention of the police, he thought proper to make the best of his way to the coast, where he first commenced smuggler, afterward became a pirate, and at the time I speak of had become the captain of a formidable band of rogues, who, as occasion offered, were either banditti, smugglers, or pirates. It had been reported that he was in the habit of seizing upon any beautiful women that he could entrap into his power and selling them as slaves to the Dey of Algiers. Some other acts, equally creditable to his good taste and benevolent disposition, were also reported of him. Certain it is, that he was not particular as to how he procured whatever was worth procuring. That he was brave could not be denied ; that he liked good wine, and drank as much as he could get, was also equally worthy of belief ; and that he could sing a good song none doubted who had once enjoyed his minstrelsy.

“ After a hard ride through the most unfrequented roads, amid a wild and picturesque part of the country, for the banditti were making a circuit to avoid pursuit, they approached Alcala, in the neighbourhood of the ancient aqueduct. Not a sound escaped from the lips of either of the party during their flight. The cavalier, seeing that resist-

ance was useless, was wise enough to keep himself quiet ; and the abbess, observing that little regard was paid to religion by the lawless men in whose power she was, chose to hold her tongue. The robbers knew the value of silence too well to destroy it. At last the word ' Parada' was given, and the men halted.

" They had arrived at the base of a steep hill, which appeared overgrown with palmitos ; the Indian fig, the olive, and some old ilex trees shadowed the spot. Here the robbers made their prisoners dismount ; and, after undoing their bandages, led them to a hollow in the mountain, which, to a casual spectator, seemed only a mere hole. They had not proceeded in it far before, after pushing through a door, they perceived a torch burning in a stone wall : the leader took this from the place where it had been deposited, and led the party down a flight of steps. They then found themselves in an extensive subterranean cavern, with numerous passages leading in different directions. Here part of the banditti separated from the rest, taking with them the horses ; the remainder proceeded on, and turning into another passage opened a door. The prisoners were introduced into a lofty chamber, well filled with costly furniture ; barrels and boxes lay strewed about in confusion ; and against the wall hung pistols, carbines, sabres, articles of apparel, and many other things, both useful and ornamental, but placed together without judgment or order—most conspicuous of which were a variety of wine-skins well filled. At a table carved of the richest wood, and covered with silver flagons, dishes of pines, of grapes, of other fruits, and meat, in the same precious metal, with other tempting provocatives to sociality, sat the formidable Padre Salvador, who had been, as usual, paying attention to the wine-skin. He was a man of about forty, with a tremendous pair of mustaches and great bushy whiskers ; his nose and cheeks were tinged with a glowing red ; his gray eyes were bright and piercing ; his look rather sinister ; and the expression of his mouth indicated sensuality. His dress set off his athletic form. A short velvet jacket, studded with small gold buttons, thrown open, discovered an embroidered waistcoat, covering a shirt or under-garment of fine silk, over which he wore a gold chain and crucifix, and a variety of other earthly ornaments, sacred and profane. In a rich silken sash, tied

round his waist, were placed two pair of large pistols, a poniard, and close by its side was a Toledo rapier of an alarming length. His smallclothes were also of velvet slashed with silk, with leggins also of silk. Short boots, of yellow leather, trimmed with silver, and a richly embroidered cap, completed his costume.

“ ‘ Quien va ? ’ inquired the captain of the banditti, as the party entered. Then observing the prisoners and their appearance, he rose, and, with much apparent courtesy, addressed the gentleman, ‘ Senor, esta Vm buena ! ’ then the lady, taking off his cap, and letting a profusion of black ringlets fall upon his shoulders, ‘ Senora, me han dicho que Vm, esta buena. You are both welcome. Ah ! I perceive, ’ observing the sacred robe of the abbess, ‘ Beatissima Senora ! I crave your blessing. You will not refuse it to so excellent a member of the holy mother church as Padre Salvador ? ’

“ ‘ Sacrilegious wretch ! ’ replied the abbess, her eyes flashing indignation at the bandit, ‘ instantly release me, and conduct me back to my convent, or you and yours shall lie under an anathema ; and the church, whom you have so greatly outraged, shall make a fearful example of you ! ’

“ ‘ Mater Dei ! what eyes she has ! ’ exclaimed the Padre. ‘ They will fetch me a good price. ’

“ ‘ Padre Salvador ! ’ said the young cavalier, ‘ name our ransom, and I will engage you shall receive it. ’

“ ‘ A thousand thanks, senor, ’ replied the ex-ecclesiastic, with a bow : ‘ you are a perfect cavalier. But the fact is, I like both of you so well, that I could not part with you on any terms. ’ Then bawling out at the top of his lungs, ‘ Hullo ! Diavola, come hither, girl ! ’ an old negress, of a most unprepossessing physiognomy, entered the chamber. ‘ Ah, my maja ! have you come at last ? Take this most reverend abbess to her chamber, and let her have everything she requires : and, do you hear ! if you let her escape I’ll cut your black carcass into quartos ? Dona, I kiss your hand ! ’ The abbess, observing the uselessness of resistance, followed her guide in silence ; and the captain having dismissed his followers, addressed the cavalier :—

“ ‘ As for you, senor ! I like your frankness. Sit down. Here is wine—wine of Xeres—wine of the best. Mi amigo,—I drink to our better acquaintance. ’

“ The padre took a hearty draught from the silver flagon ;

and the cavalier, thinking that more was to be gained by falling into the humour of his captor than by opposing him, resolved to endeavour to gain his confidence, and appear as cheerful as if he was under no apprehension.

“ ‘*Beatissimo Padre,*’ replied the young man gayly, ‘you do me honour. I drink your health and hope for your friendship.’

“ ‘*Sancta Maria!*’ exclaimed the other with seeming delight, ‘as sure as I enjoy the one do you deserve the other. By what good fortune came I possessed of such a treasure?’

“ ‘You shall hear,’ said the unknown: ‘My father is a rich merchant of Cadiz, named Pedro Gonzalez, and I am his only son. He is, consequently, very much attached to me, and does not like me to be out of his sight; but I, wishing to escape from the dull life I lead at home, and wanting to see the world, left Cadiz clandestinely yesterday morning, with a well-filled purse, determined upon seeking adventures. Here is the purse,’ said the cavalier, drawing from his breast a long leathern bag, well filled with pistoles; then handing it to the robber, he asked, ‘May I beg your acceptance of it as a token of my regard?’

“ ‘*Senor,* you are *too* good!’ observed the robber modestly, while stowing away the gift into his belt. ‘But perhaps I’m robbing you?’ he asked with apparent earnestness.

“ ‘Oh, not at all,’ replied the other. ‘Well, to go on with my story. I had got a little way beyond Seville, and was congratulating myself on my escape from the thraldom I had so long endured, when I heard the scream of a woman in distress. I drew my rapier, and hastening on, observed the senora who has just now left us struggling in the arms of two of your comrades. One I quickly disabled; but while I was attacking the other, my arms were pinioned behind me. I was placed on a horse, and, with the lady I attempted to rescue, I was brought here!’

“ ‘’Twas bravely done, *Señor Pedro Gonzalez!*’ exclaimed the captain of the banditti. ‘By our Lady, ’twas an honourable deed! I should have done the same myself. Give me your hand, young man. *El valor y el honor son las dos principales dotes que caracterizan al héroe!*’

“ Pedro Gonzalez appeared to blush at the compliment.

“Take another draught, mi amigo! By my soul, I begin to love you as if you were my father's son!”

“The young man did as he was desired. ‘This night shall be the commencement of a long friendship,’ continued the chief. ‘I drink to your everlasting prosperity! But, my prince of merchants, surely you have a voice, and some skill in minstrelsy? I amuse myself occasionally with strumming this guitar. Here, try if you can make it discourse in any sort of decent fashion.’

“‘I will do my best,’ replied the merchant's son, taking the instrument and tuning it. ‘But what will you have, señor capitano? Will you have something touching, or something stirring?’

“‘Oh, the latter, by all means,’ replied the other. ‘I hate your lachrymose ditties about tears and fears, and sighing and dying. I like something that rouses and inspires; a good wholesome song of the wars, that stirs you up like a trumpet.’

“‘Your taste is like my own, señor padre; so a war-song it shall be.

“SONG OF THE BATTLE.

“‘The Moorish king looked from his golden pavilion,
Where his army spread forth like a sea of vermilion;
“We will crush those proud Christians!” he said with delight,
And their bones shall be all that shall tell of the fight.
We will sweep them before us like chaff on the wind,
And leave of their name not a relic behind!”

“‘The Christian prince led on his lessening numbers,
Long kept from their food, long deprived of their slumbers;
As he gazed on the heroes who thronged by his side,
“O God! in thy name do we battle!” he cried;
Then down on the sod every knee was bent low,
And a pray'r rose to Heaven for aid 'gainst the foe.

“‘On, on, rushed the Christians! it was no illusion:
The Moors stood and struggled, then fled in confusion.
They fought at the sunrise, at close of the day,
And at night still the sword was seen cleaving its way.
There's a mountain of bones where the Moorish king stood,
And the place where he fought is a river of blood!”

“‘Mater Dei!’ exclaimed the bandit, striking the table till he made the flagons jump again, ‘that is a song! And

what a voice thou hast ! Let me embrace thee, my friend !' The padre rose from his seat, and gave his companion a friendly hug, something after the fashion of a bear caressing a mastiff. 'I would drink the sea up out of good fellowship for thee,' he continued, taking another draught, and handing the vessel to the cavalier.

" 'I am much beholden to you, reverendissimo padre,' replied the youth, pretending to drink deep, yet putting down the cup untasted. 'But surely you have many a good song with which you intend to delight your guest. Doubtless you have a voice full of most excellent melody. I pray you, father, oblige me.'

" 'I would do anything for thee, mi hijo,' said the other ; 'and, as thou sayest, I *have* a voice. When I was in the monastery the women used to come many a league to hear me sing, I had such a way of giving out the magnificat. Thou shalt hear.' Then, with stentorian lungs, he commenced bawling out—

" 'Magnificat anima mea Dominum.

Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.'

" 'The priest stared with astonishment when he heard his companion continue the service.

" 'Quia respexit

Humilitatem ancillæ suæ, ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.'

" 'Sancta Maria!' exclaimed the padre, 'what do I hear ? Why, thou hast it as pat as if thou hadst had to chant it all thy life.'

" 'My father was regular in his attendance at church,' replied the son of Pedro Gonzalez, 'and always took me with him. I remember the words from having heard them so frequently.'

" 'Thou hast been well brought up, of a surety, my son,' said the captain. 'Dost thou remember the Ave Regina ?' and he commenced the following antiphon to the Virgin, his companion taking the alternate lines :—

" 'Salve Regina cœlorum,'

'Ave Domina angelorum :'

'Salve radix, salve porta,'

'Ex qua mundo lux est orta :'

'Gauda Virgo gloriosa,'
'Super omnes speciosa :'
'Vale, O valde decora,'
'Et pro nobis Christum exora.'

" 'What a memory thou hast !' remarked Padre Salvador with delight, taking another draught at the flagon. His face now became red as a burning coal, and his eyes twinkled with a bright but unsteady light. Then wiping his mustache, he handed the flagon, with a trembling hand, to the merchant's son. 'But drink, my son,' he continued, 'drink ! This is the true lachrymæ Christi. If thou hast been piously brought up, drink ! But I have wine of all kinds,—of La Mancha, of the Val de Peñas, Malaga, Lagrimas, Bals-apintada, Bieni-carlo, Paxerete, and every other of the most approved vintage. Or, if thou art hungry, eat ; here are figs, and grapes, and olives, and melons, and here is the remnant of an excellent jaspacho. So eat, drink, and enjoy thyself.'

" 'Padre, you have a voice like an angel,' remarked the young man, as he pretended to fulfil the bidding of the robber ; 'I wonder not that you were a favourite with the ladies.'

" 'Dost think so, my son ?' replied the other, evidently gratified with the flattery, gross as it was. 'And thou thyself singest like a nightingale. I love thee, my son. I love thee, and will be a father to thee. Embrace me, my child.' The priest rose to embrace the cavalier ; but finding he could not keep his equilibrium, he sat down again. 'My bowels yearn for thee !' he continued. 'Virgo clementissima, how I love thee ! Thou hast left thy old father ; I will be to thee a better. Thou wishest to see the world ; I will show thee the world. Thou art ambitious ; I will make thee a great man. I will be thy friend, thy counsellor, thy guide. Thou art brave, honourable, and adventurous. Thou shalt become one of us ! I have under me as honest a bellacada as ever pulled a trigger. I lost my lieutenant last night in a scuffle with some carbineers. Thou shalt take his place. Nay, though thou thinkest thyself unworthy of so high an honour, I will have it so. I have as swift a polacca, a few miles from hence, as ever hoisted the black flag. The greater portion of my men are now on board, preparing for immediate embarkation ; the rest by this time are, no doubt,

gloriously drunk, in honour of our speedy departure. We have another place of concealment on the seacoast, in which a portion of the band always reside. Thou shalt be my second in command. I shall sail to the African coast with the beautiful abbess, now with the black cook in the second chamber on the right, for whom I hope to get a good price. Thou shalt have thy share. What sayest thou, my son? Wilt thou become my lieutenant, with the prospect of succeeding to the command of the troop when I get knocked on the head or otherwise disposed of?

"The cavalier expressed his gratitude for the high honour to be conferred upon him; and said, although he had as yet done little to deserve such a mark of esteem, he trusted his future conduct would prove that the worthy padre had not thrown away his kindness.

" 'Then drink success to la Santissima Trinidad,' said the captain of the piratical vessel, shaking his companion cordially by the hand. 'Thou art now my lieutenant, and shalt be clothed and fed like a prince. Drink, camarada, drink!'

"Pedro Gonzalez took the cup to his lips, and pretended to take a hearty draught.

" 'Thou hast taken a long pull,' remarked the other, holding the flagon in his own hands, 'and I will follow thy example.' The cavalier eyed him anxiously; and saw the muscles of his broad neck distending with the enormous mouthfuls of wine he poured into his capacious throat. Down it went gurgling into his stomach like a river rushing over a rock, and Pedro thought the draught would never be concluded. At last, turning the flagon upside down to prove that there was not a drop left in it, Padre Salvador fell back in his seat, gasping for breath, his eyes starting out of their sockets, and his face swollen into the resemblance of a rotten melon. His features at this moment bore the most curious expression that could possibly be imagined. It was a mixture of the sensual, the stupid, and the grotesque; and the efforts that he occasionally made to look dignified and grave produced a still more ludicrous effect. For a few minutes he kept staring at his companion, who thought it best to affect intoxication. All at once he piously bawled out at the top of his voice, now grown hoarse and thick, 'Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto!' Then vainly endeavour-

ing to sit upright, he tried to look steadily at the merchant's son, whom he addressed, spluttering his words out a few at a time, 'Lieutenant, you're drunk! you're—in an abominable—state—of intox—toxication! I never allow—anybody—to get drunk—but myself.' He pulled a pistol from his belt. 'Now,' thought the cavalier, 'it's all over with me.' The padre made two or three ineffectual efforts to steady his position with one hand; but his arm slipped from under him, his head sunk upon his shoulder, his weapon fell from his grasp, and the captain of banditti dropped down insensible on the floor. In an instant Pedro sprang upon his prostrate body, took possession of his weapons, looked to see if they were in proper order, then, taking the lamp from its place, with a pistol in the other hand, he left the room.

"Pedro Gonzalez cautiously but rapidly proceeded through the vault to the second chamber on the right. On opening the door, he discovered the old negress pouring some wine out of a flask into a goblet. On seeing an armed stranger enter the room she let fall the flask, and uttered an exclamation of terror. He put a pistol to her ear, and commanded her, on fear of instant death, to take the lamp, and show him the way to the stable; threatening, in case of her making the least alarm, or attempting to mislead him, to blow her into a thousand pieces. The black woman's eyes appeared ready to jump out of her head; her two or three teeth knocked together, and her limbs trembled so that she seemed to have lost the power of directing them. Taking the abbess by the arm, who said nothing, but looked her thanks, he pushed the old woman out of the room. She led the way, the muzzle of the pistol close to her head, through several windings of the vault: at last they came to a passage, much narrower than any other part, at the end of which was a long apartment, evidently used by the robbers as a stable. Between twenty and thirty horses were found there. The merchant's son selected one from the number, and showed his judgment in the selection; for he made choice of a fine Arabian mare, no doubt imported from the African coast by Padre Salvador for his own use. Her he saddled, and, in the rapidity with which he did it, proved that he had done similar labours more than once before. Placing the abbess on the saddle, he again employed the old

negress as a guide, to show him out of the cavern, who, however loath to do so, stood in fear of the pistol too much to refuse. As they were proceeding they heard a noise, and, listening, could distinguish the words 'Kyrie eleison ! Christe eleison !' shouted with great energy ; then all was silent. It was the last vocal effort of the drunken padre. When they came to the entrance of the cave, Pedro placed a gag on the mouth of the old woman, tied her hands behind her and her legs together, and there left her ; then mounting behind the abbess, he was out of sight in a moment."

CHAPTER IV.

Mephistophiles's story continued.—A little mystification.—The abbess's confession leads to greater sins, proving how dangerous it is for ladies to confess at all.—The mystery explained.

"THE sisters were all assembled in the refectory before matins, waiting for the appearance of their new companion, la Señorita Batista de Vedras, who arrived the night previous ; and, having been given into the guardianship of Sister Rosa, she had, under pretence of fatigue, been hurried off by her to bed, without allowing the nuns an opportunity of expressing to the young stranger their welcomes.

" 'Sister Rosa is late this morning,' said Sister Teresa, 'but it is not to be wondered at. She has not seen her cousin for many years, and they must have a deal to say to each other. I only know, that if a relative of mine were to come here, I should not leave my cell all day, if I could help it ; that is, if we slept together. But what do you think of the señorita, Sister Margarita ?'

" 'It is scarcely fair to give an opinion,' replied the other, 'I have seen so very little of her.'

" 'Oh, but I can always tell in five minutes whether I shall like a person or not,' continued her companion ; 'and I am positive I shall like Señorita Batista very much. I wish they would come down, for I want to ask her all about

the people in Seville, and wish to know what everybody is doing there.'

" 'It is very wrong of you,' said Sister Dorotea, 'to indulge in such idle wishes, or to ask any such questions.'

" 'What do you think of her, Sister Ester?' asked Teresa, without noticing the rebuke.

" 'Not much,' replied the other, with some asperity.

" 'She's so awkward,' remarked Sister Victoria, moving her figure with as much grace as she could assume.

" 'She's too tall,' observed Sister Clara, who was remarkably short.

" 'Her complexion is as dark as a Moor's,' said Sister Casandra, who was herself nearly as brown as a mulatto.

" 'What a mouth she has!' exclaimed Sister Beatriz, who had always been noticed for a pretty mouth.

" 'And such shoulders!' remarked Sister Benita, taking a side look at her own.

" 'For my part,' said Sister Olivia, 'I think her very pretty, only the expression of her features is a little too masculine; her figure, also, might be improved.'

" 'But what eyes she has! they're so like a man's!' exclaimed Sister Barbara, with her usual simplicity.

" 'What do you know of men's eyes, Sister Barbara?' asked Sister Dorotea, gravely. 'I can safely say that I never looked at a man in my life.'

" 'She never had an opportunity,' observed Sister Juana, in an under tone, to a companion.

" 'Chito!' exclaimed Sister Ana; 'they come.'

" Sister Rosa entered, blushing deeply, leading the fair stranger by the hand. The sisters behaved very affectionately to the señorita: all of them embraced her, and inquired how she slept—whether she had recovered from her fatigues; and asked a thousand other questions equally friendly, to all of which the most satisfactory answers were given. It was observed that Sister Rosa was very impatient during the time the nuns were exhibiting their affection to her cousin, and followed her with her eyes, as if afraid that some one would run away with her. The señorita did appear rather tall, rather awkward, and of rather a dark complexion; and there was something in the expression of her eyes a little too bold for a young lady well brought up; but, as little Teresa said, when it was remarked to her, we

do not make our own eyes, and cannot be answerable for our complexions. The young lady, however, soon made herself agreeable to the greater portion of the sisters, and talked away, as young ladies will talk when they are perfectly at their ease. Sister Rosa said nothing. The conversation turned to the subject of the abbess's visit, and Sister Rosa seemed very uneasy. There was no sympathy expressed for the erring sister of St. Ursula, for those that were inclined to pity her fate did not publish their sentiments to the rest. It was thought very extraordinary that the abbess should have stayed out all night, having previously said that she should be back the same day. The nuns were engaged in conjecturing the cause of her absence, when the convent bell rang; and it having been ascertained that their superior had arrived, they all proceeded to the sacristy to meet her, taking with them the *Señorita Batista*.

"The abbess looked ill and fatigued; and there was in her manner, while addressing her nuns, a restlessness which seemed the result of a mind engaged on a subject very different from that on which it appeared to be employed. She paid little or no attention to the stranger; and even while at matins, a close observer might have noticed her perfect abstraction. Her eyes were fixed, her look vacant, her lips compressed; occasionally a flash of meaning seemed to dart from beneath her eyelashes, and an eloquent smile played about her lips, but in a moment they were obscured by a shadow of deep melancholy. After prayers she retired to her own apartment, giving orders not to be disturbed till Father Geronimo arrived. Some alarm was expressed by the sisterhood at her indisposition, but they all attributed it to the effect of her unpleasant duties of the previous day, and proceeded to prepare themselves for confession; always, in their little community, a matter of considerable importance. The sins they had committed were recalled to memory, and the penance with which it was expected they were to be removed was imagined. Father Geronimo at last was announced; and was ushered into the confessional. Report did not appear to have done him any injustice. Of his ugliness there could not be a doubt, and his stupidity seemed equally conspicuous. Never was such a form and face created. Imagine two sharp gray

eyes, that looked from under a pair of shaggy eyebrows in the most forbidding manner; a nose that rose from beneath them hard and sharp like the ridge of a house; and a mouth broad and misshapen, seemingly adapted for all sorts of purposes except the purpose for which it had been made. His body was bent nearly double, and his corporation appeared so extensive that his limbs almost refused to do their office. The cowl concealed his shaven crown, and a thick cord fastened his robe, which was of coarse woollen, round his huge waist.

"The confessor had not waited long before the abbess entered the chamber. Her step was slow, and her appearance that of one undecided as to the course she intended to follow.

"*'Benedicite, daughter!'* said the priest, seating himself on a chair.

"*'Your benediction, father, is most welcome,'* replied the abbess, kneeling before him. *'I have come to you to make a clean heart,—to unburden my soul of its transgressions. Father, I have sinned; I have most grievously offended. My spirit is still clinging to the world, still thirsting for its pleasures, still yearning for its delights. I have striven against the tempter, and I have struggled against myself. Oh! how I have tried to put down the unbidden wishes, to stifle the unholy desires, and to keep sacred those vows which I swore to reverence; but evil thoughts enter into my mind, and my heart rebels against me!'*

"*'These are but trifles, daughter,'* replied the confessor; *'the mere errors of youth. Let not these distress thee. Thou hast already repented of them, therefore thou mayst dismiss the sins from thy soul. They are forgiven.'* Never did the voice of Padre Geronimo sound to the abbess so amiable. She fully expected, as usual, a long lecture and a severe penance: her gratification may be imagined when she found her confessor to be in so generous a disposition. *'But hast thou no other sin on thy conscience, daughter?'* asked the priest, eying her attentively. The Superior of Santa Clara appeared to quail beneath his gaze. She became agitated, turned pale, and trembled. At last, after a violent effort, she again proceeded.

"*'Father! the human soul is full of wickedness—our*

natures run into evil—our hearts delight in doing wrong. We make vows, but we have not strength to keep them ; and we form good resolutions, but we scatter them to the winds. I have vowed, but my vow hath been broken. When I entered into this blessed state of celibacy, I thrust from my heart every thought of idle love—every dream of man's affection ; yet I have listened to a cavalier, who addressed me in the language of love. It was by accident that I heard him, but I had not the courage to denounce him to the authorities. He saved my life when I was in the power of robbers, and rescued me from slavery. Afterward, when he dared to utter to me words of passion, I did not allow the sacrilege to receive the punishment it deserved. I could not give up the preserver of my life to a cruel death.'

" 'Thou didst right, daughter. It would have been a sin hadst thou evinced such ingratitude. It was but natural for the youth to admire one whose personal attractions must have made upon him a powerful impression ; but as it was by accident only thou didst hear his addresses, thy soul is guiltless of any sin in that transaction.'

"If the abbess was pleased with the confessor a few minutes since, she was now delighted with him : in fact, she could not help feeling surprised at the change in his manner. Had she not looked in his face, she would have doubted his identity.

" 'Daughter !' said the priest, again regarding her with a scrutinizing look, 'this is not all thou hast to confess ?'

"The abbess endeavoured to assume tranquillity while his look was upon her, but there was something so searching in his gaze that her own eyes shrunk from it. Again she became confused, her colour went and came, and her limbs shook violently. She buried her face in her hands ; she tried to cool the throbbing of her temples, and to lessen the pulsation of her heart ; but happening to look up, she caught the priest's eye fixed on her, with a light so concentrated, and an expression so peculiar, that imagining he was acquainted with the circumstances, and had only affected kindness the more completely to deceive her, she lost all command of her feelings.

" 'Father ! father !' she exclaimed, clasping his knees wildly, 'I will confess all. Oh ! I have sinned grievously,

but I will cheerfully undergo any penance to which you may think proper to sentence me. That young man, father—that cavalier—he said he was a merchant's son of Cadiz—'

"What of him, daughter?" inquired the confessor, eagerly.

"I have dared to love him, father!' Then observing the priest turn his head away, she exclaimed, 'Oh! do not turn from me in anger. I could not help it. He has taken possession of my heart and soul. I see nothing, hear nothing, think of nothing but him.'

"The confessor rose from the chair, she caught hold of his robe to detain him. The robe fell to the ground, carrying with it a mask to which it was attached, and the glowing face and handsome figure of Pedro Gonzalez stood before her. In an instant he caught her in his arms, and imprinted one prolonged and burning kiss upon her lips. She did not attempt to push him from her; she opened not her mouth to chide him; she was so taken by surprise that she appeared as if she had not the power of resistance.

"Mariana! beloved and beautiful Mariana!' he passionately exclaimed, gazing on her with the fondest devotion, 'forgive me this deception! I could think of no other plan of gaining an interview. Long has my heart been dreaming of such a meeting as this, long living upon the mere imagination of so much happiness; but I hardly ever dared in my sober thoughts to suppose that I should clasp your lovely form in these delighted arms, or that I should taste the sweets of those dear lips, or that I should gaze enamoured on those dazzling eyes. Tell me, again, divinest of earth's most divine creatures! that you love me. Let me hear the sweet confession again expressed, and I will return the love you acknowledge a thousandfold. You shall receive an adoration far beyond the devotion ever offered to a woman—you shall be worshipped as a deity!'

"Women always imagine that they are thought little of, if easily won; consequently, however strong their inclinations may be, they will make a great show of resistance, appear provided for a long siege, and seem inclined to hold out the citadel to the last. They think it is not creditable to surrender at the first summons. Like a general with a small garrison, beleaguered by a very superior force, they

are alarmed lest the fort should be taken by stratagem or force, and deprive them of the merit of making a timely submission; yet they cannot be brought to give up their position until every disposition has been made by the enemy to commence the attack. The abbess appeared displeased, looked indignant, and thrust her lover from her.

“‘Is this the way,’ she exclaimed with apparent surprise, ‘that you address the Abbess of Santa Clara? Are you aware that you have committed sacrilege, for which your life would be justly forfeited? Know; young man, that what you heard were the secrets of the confessional—sins for which I am sincerely repentant. You have presumed too much. But I do not wish to have you punished. The services you have rendered me incline me to pardon you. Go, Pedro Gonzalez! and never again attempt so heinous an offence.’

“Seeing the merchant’s son with eyes cast down, and every external appearance of humiliation, opening the door to let himself out, she caught him by the arm, drew him back violently, and closed the door.

“‘Are you mad!’ she exclaimed, frantically, ‘that you wish to be the author of your own death and mine! Your discovery within the walls of this convent would be fatal to us both. Into what a situation have you placed me by your rashness!’

“‘Pardon me, adored Mariana,’ he replied, kneeling at her feet. ‘I am mad—lost—irretrievably lost! But ’tis the light of those fond eyes which has caused the distraction of my brain. And now, as enraptured I drink the radiant beams that flash within their gaze, my phrensy is increased. There is a fever in my blood over which the physician has no power. Oh! if it is a crime to love!’ he passionately exclaimed, gently insinuating his arm round her waist, ‘rather attribute the blame to the bright source from whence it flowed,—to that magic beauty in which my soul has been spellbound! But there cannot be a fault in that which arises from so much excellence. Think you these charms, over which I now hang enamoured, were created for no other purpose than to decay unnoticed within stone walls? Heaven showers its gifts for other, wiser purposes; and, in endeavouring to make useless those blessings which were bestowed as a means of giving happiness to others,

you commit a crime both to God and man, for which your soul will be answerable at the day of judgment. Were those lustrous orbs,' he continued, looking into her eyes, as if his soul hung upon their lashes, 'the torches of love's own kindling, made only to be dimmed by meditation; were those glowing cheeks, the fruit of beauty's own rearing, ripened but to be blighted by fasting? or must that delicious mouth, truth's rosiest blossom, bud only to be withered by self-mortification? No, dearest! Though fate has made you what you are, it is your duty to return to a more natural state of existence at every fitting opportunity. For the enjoyment of love were those charms bestowed; and, cradled in these trembling arms, and caressed by these glowing lips, they ought now to partake of the felicity for which they were created.'

"There is not much occasion to enter here into further particulars. Passion is much the same in every climate. It is the quicksilver of human nature; and though it rises in warmer latitudes to a point of more continued heat, in the coldest lands it occasionally reaches an equally intemperate height."

"The mischief it produces shows itself in shapes that have a general similarity with each other in every atmosphere," said I. "Reason and religion during its supremacy must have no existence. Passion is in fact a usurper; and, like all who obtain power through unlawful sources, can only continue its rule by such violent means as endanger whatever it influences. But I am interrupting you. Proceed."

Mephistophiles regarded me with a look in which scorn seemed blended with contempt, but without taking any other notice of my observation, proceeded:—

"When a woman once abandons herself to the full influence of her feelings, like a high-spirited horse freed from its shackles, she sets off full speed, bursts through every impediment, and is only to be stopped when the impulse is exhausted. The abbess forgot her vows—her sacred character—everything but her lover; and in the enjoyment of his affection she seemed to breathe a new existence. The meeting in the confessional was not their only interview; and these secret meetings began, at length, to constitute her sole happiness. At other times she appeared restless,

melancholy, and reserved ; spoke harshly and peevishly to those who addressed her ; and looked watchful and anxious, as if she dreaded some evil. She scarcely paid the least attention to the Señorita Batista ; indeed, it was but too manifest that she was inattentive to everything. The sisters were surprised and alarmed at the apparent indisposition of their superior, and were earnest in their prayers for her recovery.

“ As for the fair stranger, she had become a great favourite, in spite of her awkwardness ; and, to the great uneasiness of Sister Rosa, was upon the most friendly terms with several of the sisterhood. It was thought strange that Sister Rosa should evince such inquietude when her cousin was caressed by any of the nuns ; and it was rather extraordinary that this should have occasioned an altercation between the relatives, in which Sister Rosa shed tears. However, matters continued in this state for a few days longer, when, one morning, it was discovered that la Señorita Batista de Vedras was missing. Every search was made for her, but she had completely disappeared. Most of the nuns were greatly scandalized at her unceremonious departure. Some appeared much concerned at it, and Sister Rosa seemed inconsolable. When the abbess was informed of the circumstance, she made no remark, and afterward took no notice of the affair.

“ A short time previous to these occurrences there arrived in Seville, on a visit to his friends, a young student of Salamanca, called Don Urbano de St. Juan. He was quite a youth, handsome and accomplished. He had been left early in life to the care of an affectionate aunt ; and being the heir of considerable wealth, he soon met with opportunities of enjoying every kind of pleasure. When he arrived at Seville, he found himself surrounded by the most tempting enjoyments ; for of all towns in Spain, Seville is the gayest, the most luxurious, and the most idle. The men are the most licentious, and the women the most beautiful. The juvenile face of Don Urbano was quickly noticed by señoritas and señoras, and his dark eyes and beardless cheek attracted universal admiration ; when it was rumoured that, in addition to these attractions, the more sterling gifts of fortune were added, his popularity among the sex became general. Many charming señoras had he taken

to the delightful gardens and palace of the Alcazar, once the residence of the Moorish princes. Their smiles, of course, were liberally bestowed upon the handsome cavalier for his kind attentions; and the priests, who swarm about Seville like vermin, became jealous of him; they imagined that he was interfering with their privileges. He could seldom pass under a balcony without finding a *carta amatoria* at his feet; on the Alameda he found bright eyes peeping out of their mantillas in every direction; and whenever he went to a tertulia, there was scarcely a fan in the room that did not interpret to him the situation and wishes of its possessor: in fact, he might have been the cortejo of every senora, and the amante of every senorita. For a youth of seventeen, he had enough on his hands. Here, too, he renewed his acquaintance with the canon Francisco. For some time the fellow-students were continually together, but on a sudden the archbishop's nephew missed his companion; and, although he went in search of him in every place which he was in the habit of frequenting, Don Urbano was not to be found. Fearing that his young friend had been made the victim of some jealous marijo, or had fallen into the hands of the inquisition, the former had almost ceased to search for him. A circumstance, however, which occurred a short time afterward, brought them again together.

"Passing along the Paseo the canon Francisco observed a lady, of rather a commanding figure, regarding him earnestly, with a pair of the blackest eyes ever seen in Seville. The canon was always ready for any adventure; and observing that the dona made signs for him to follow, after her he went without the least hesitation. As he walked behind her, he was much surprised to observe the lengthened strides which the lady took; but, as he thought to himself, perhaps she is in a hurry, and although he would have preferred a little more grace, still he had no occasion to quarrel with the *steps* she was then taking. They proceeded to a house near the Alameda; and the lady having conducted him in, led him to a saloon, where she sat down, courteously directing the priest to follow her example. The voice appeared familiar to him, yet he could not then imagine which of the beauties of Seville she could be. Her face he had not seen. A pair of large black eyes were glancing out of the veil, and they seemed to find infinite diversion in his astonish-

ment. The canon thought he should now make the best use of his time ; so he commenced vowing that his heart was being scorched by the lightning of her eyes, and that he could not live an instant longer without finding a restorative in her balmy lips. As he was kneeling down before the senora, and passionately pouring out all this and much of the same kind, fully expecting every moment that she would melt into his arms—in just what he thought the critical moment of his expected happiness, he was petrified with astonishment at hearing a laugh which appeared to shake the very walls, and looking up saw his young friend, Don Urbano de St. Juan, dressed in the habit of a novice, half choking himself in a fit of the most obstreperous mirth. Seeing the state of the case, the canon thought it best to laugh too ; and then having mutually enjoyed their diversion, Don Urbano related the cause of his disguise.

“ ‘ You know, *mi amigo*,’ he said, ‘ my weakness in regard to the sex. I would rush into any danger, if I thought Love, invested in all his attractions, was to be found there. Having discovered that a beautiful little creature, who had been a playmate of mine in my infancy, and a sort of *maja* of my boyhood, had retired to a convent in this neighbourhood, I determined to see if she still retained for me that affection she once swore should last with her life. Despite the precautions of the priests to prevent a civilian from being acquainted with a nun, I was so fortunate as to gain an interview with her ; and, finding her everything I desired, I formed a plan to reside in the convent as a *senorita* desirous of escaping from the world. In this dress I was, without difficulty, admitted ; and there I have been living, like the grand *senor*, surrounded by the most tempting beauties that ever blessed this sublunary world. In this way I should, doubtless, have lived some little time longer ; but my little baggage became so confoundedly jealous of me, that, for fear of a discovery, I was obliged to take French leave. Now, *padre reverendissimo*, as I really have an affection for the gipsy, if you can help me to carry her off, you will lay me under an everlasting obligation.’ ”

“ The canon promised his assistance. ‘ But first,’ he replied, ‘ you must tell me the name of the convent, and also that of the lady.’ ”

“ ‘ The name of the convent, *senor padre*,’ said the

other, 'is Santa Clara, and it is situated on the other side of the Guadalquivir.'

"'Ah!' exclaimed the canon with unfeigned surprise, mingled with some alarm, 'Santa Clara, said you? and what may the name of the lady be?'

"'Sister Rosa,' returned his companion. 'But you appear astonished. Surely you have no adventure in that quarter?'

"'Oh no!' replied the priest, discovering his fears to be without foundation. 'But it happens, fortunately for you, that the convent which those nuns inhabit was formerly the residence of my father, Don Francisco de Montano, who, unfortunately for me, squandered away his patrimony in dissipation, and left me to profit from the generosity of an uncle. I am acquainted with every nook and corner in the place; and although many alterations have been made since I was its inhabitant, I have no doubt that the subterranean passage leading from the river to the house, which existed in my father's time, though not used now, may still be rendered available to assist you in your purpose.'

"'Carba de San Pedro! that is lucky,' exclaimed the youth, 'and we will set about it immediately.'

"The canon well knew that in assisting Don Urbano, he was hurrying a dangerous rival out of his neighbourhood."

CHAPTER V.

The story of Mephistophiles continued.—The sisters in commotion, and the abbess in despair.—A nun at her devotions.—The effects of jealousy, and the end of the sisters of Santa Clara and the student of Salamanca.

"THE nuns of Santa Clara had almost ceased to wonder at the departure of la Senorita Batista de Vedras; and many had even given up their amiable task of pointing out to their companions the imperfections they had discovered in her during her residence with them. Sister Rosa kept apart from the rest, looking very miserable, and, in answer to

affectionate inquiries, complained of the toothache. Now Sister Rosa never had the toothache before. Others, also, who could not disguise the melancholy they felt since the absence of the novice, complained of the same disorder. One accounted for it in consequence of her having eaten some unripe grapes; another laid it to sundry green figs; a third, to a cold; and the rest, to causes equally probable. Remedies were tried, but without effect; charms were not more successful; and the saints were even called upon by some of the more affectionate nuns in behalf of their afflicted sisters; but the saints evidently did not choose to show their skill as dentists, for they left the patients just as they found them. Things continued in this state for a few days, when, one morning, it was discovered that Sister Rosa was missing. Never was there such commotion in a convent. A search commenced—an inquiry was instituted—and, to the great horror of the community, it was ascertained that their abandoned sister had been seen on board a polacca in the port of Cadiz, in company with a caballero; and when, on further inquiry, they were made aware that the cavalier was Don Urbano de St. Juan, and that this identical Don Urbano had been living in the convent in the assumed character of a novice, the consternation was beyond belief. Sister Dorotea fainted when she heard that she had been associating with a man: many were equally shocked; and the rest were loud in their denunciation of the fictitious cousins. As for Sister Rosa, there was not a word in the vocabulary of female abuse (which is tolerably capacious) that was not lavished upon her.

“ ‘Well, I never thought either of them any good,’ remarked Sister Ester triumphantly.

“ ‘Who could have imagined such wickedness!’ exclaimed Sister Clara, lifting up her hands and eyes in astonishment.

“ ‘She has disgraced the convent!’ said Sister Victoria, seemingly highly indignant.

“ ‘Had I known the awkward creature was a man, I would have torn his eyes out,’ remarked Sister Beatriz, with considerable energy. Sister Beatriz, however, had been one of the first to discover the sex of the disguised caballero; yet his eyes had never stood in any danger from her hands.

" 'I knew it was a man !' exclaimed Sister Barbara, with no little exultation depicted in her simple countenance.

" 'Oh, Sister Barbara !' remarked the rest, quite shocked, 'how could you know such a thing ? But pray tell us all about it ? How did you find it out ? Where was it discovered ?'

" Numerous interrogatories followed to the same purpose, while the impatient and inquisitive nuns crowded round Sister Barbara to hear the interesting communication.

" 'Why I guessed it, because the eyes were so much like a man's,' replied the innocent Barbara. The sisters turned away, and could not conceal their disappointment. They afterward broke up into small parties, among which the extraordinary circumstances that had recently taken place became the topic of conversation. Sister Teresa, for once in her life, was silent.

" The abbess had, in a great measure, recovered her tranquillity ; she was more attentive to her duties, and behaved with more kindness to her nuns : but the fact was, she became aware of the necessity of dissimulation ; and when women find it necessary to deceive, nothing is more perfect than their deception. They practise a thousand arts which no man would ever imagine. However, this cannot be considered strange, for with them it is the business of their lives to disguise their natural sympathies, and they continually study the means by which they may conceal what they know, and learn what they ought not. From this arises their skill in dissimulation. When a woman, who has long enjoyed an irreproachable reputation, is discovered to have been no better than the rest, the world appear struck dumb with astonishment ; but there is little to be surprised at in 'this. Those who affect the greatest piety are generally those who find it the best disguise for great profligacy. Hypocrites have always been a numerous race. But those who begin by deceiving others, end in deceiving themselves. The abbess, well as she acted her part, could not occasionally help betraying the restlessness of her thoughts. She was, or thought she was, happy ; but it was the felicity of the opium eater. While Pedro Gonzalez visited her daily she fancied that she had nothing more to desire, and abandoned herself to the enjoyments she possessed ; but when his visits became less frequent, and a day or more intervened between

them, she began to experience that feeling of wretchedness which follows the pleasurable excitement of the intoxicating drug. In the solitude of her chamber she lay down and wept. Then she would upbraid her lover for inconstancy ; then defend him. Her thoughts would turn to the past, and to the rapture she had lately experienced. How freshly it came upon her mind ! But to those who love, imagination paints with all the vividness of reality. She saw his kindling glances ; she felt his warm caresses ; his passionate words fell like music upon her ear. The illusion vanished, and she would fancy him dead. Then she would wring her hands, and upbraid Heaven for its injustice ; think of the many virtues she had discovered in him, and lament her unhappy destiny. In a moment after the belief that he was false took possession of her, and she would walk up and down the room with hasty strides, muttering imprecations. Again she would melt into tenderness, and the tears flowed fast and free down her glowing cheeks.

"In this way a week had passed since their last interview, and she became so miserable when left to herself, and so restless and uneasy in her own chamber, that in the middle of the night, when the nuns were asleep, she used to wander about the convent like a disturbed spirit. On one of these occasions, she had entered the gardens attached to the building, in the vain hope that the freshness of the evening breeze might mitigate the burning fever which deprived her of rest and sleep. With unconscious steps she hurried through each trellised walk and verdant *bosquet*, until she found herself in the vicinity of a small postern gate opening upon the high-road to Seville, and originally contrived for the use of the domestics of the convent. To this entrance the abbess had furnished Gonsalez with a key ; and here, in happier hours, she had awaited his arrival with a beating heart, or lingered until his receding form was lost in the gray twilight of morning.

"However hopeless of his presence at such an hour, her footsteps instinctively wandered towards the cherished spot. In that land of the vine and olive, the moon exhibits a splendour unknown to less favoured climes ; and now her silvery light illumined the broad path by which this victim of her passions was advancing, and revealed a sight that overwhelmed her with despair. On turning an angle of the

walk, within a short distance of the gate, she was astonished to observe it wide open. In an instant the idea of her lover's return arose to her thoughts : with a cry of joy, she was in the act of springing forward, when her eyes rested on two figures standing beneath the branches of a venerable cork-tree that overshadowed the arched doorway. The white garments of the female immediately pointed her out as an inmate of the convent ; and the tall, commanding person of the cavalier, her companion, appeared not unknown to the wretched abbess. But her suspense was of short duration : as they emerged from their concealment into the brilliant moonlight, what was her surprise, her horror, her madness, when, in the individuals before her, she plainly recognised Sister Iñez and Pedro Gonzalez. When excited by jealousy, fear, or revenge, the senses are rendered wonderfully acute ; and clinging for support to the surrounding branches, she lent an attentive ear to catch the subject of their conversation. Her faithless paramour was arranging with Iñez an elopement from the convent for the following evening ; and when the latter, in reply to his impassioned solicitations, pronounced the name of the abbess, Gonzalez answered in terms expressive of the utmost levity and scorn. She shrunk back as if bit by an adder ; a feeling of suffocation rose in her throat ; her breath came hot and thick, and at long intervals ; and she felt as if incapable of stirring from the spot. At last a cold perspiration broke over her skin, and she appeared to revive. After a pause of a few moments she waved her hands before her eyes, imagining the whole to be a dream, and endeavoured to dispel the illusion, but the evidence of her lover's infidelity was too apparent. She did not disturb them. Changed in heart, in soul, and almost in body, she quitted the garden.

“ When the abbess reached her chamber, she stood like a person without motion or life. Her eyes were riveted on one spot, with a glassiness of look like the gaze of the dead. Her limbs appeared hard and stiff, as if she had been a thing of stone. Nothing was heard but the beating of her heart, which sounded like the rush of a distant river over its banks. In this state she remained nearly an hour. But she had not been idle : her soul had been dreaming of vengeance. The ardent love she had once felt for Pedro Gonzalez was changed to a devouring hatred. All the sweet

humanity of her heart turned to bitterness; and her mind, which had lately given birth to nothing but thoughts of affection, was now crowded with images of death. Where love had smiled, revenge now placed her bloody hand.

“‘And is it for this,’ at last she muttered, ‘that I have plunged my soul into everlasting perdition? Mountains of curses pile on his treacherous heart, and crush him down into the deepest depth of hell! What a fool have I been—a poor deluded girl—a weak, fond woman, to have been thus deceived! Yet, with what a tongue he talked! Angels might have believed him sincere, and I have been deceived! For him I have trampled on all ties, human and divine; disgraced this holy garb, defiled my body, and polluted my mind! For him I have changed my sacred vows and pious aspirations for sinful passions and unholy wishes. For him I have become an outcast from heaven—devoted to an eternal purgatory—lost, betrayed, abandoned. Yet he has left me—deserted me for another! May my withering hate cling to him! And as for her, his shameless paramour, the unblushing hypocrite, the depraved wretch! may her blood become like mine, a river of fire, scorching her flesh, and turning her heart to ashes! But I will not wait till he deceives her as he has done me. Revenge is still in my power, and she shall be its first victim. But how do I know that she is the only one? No matter, I will be revenged. May all the agonies of the wicked become his portion! Oh! had I him before me, I would tear out that false heart from his breast to feed the ravens. I hate him—loathe him—curse him!’ She walked hastily across the room, breathing inarticulate imprecations. ‘And I to have become so easy a dupe, to have been so quickly a victim! What a weak, wicked fool have I proved myself! I have become a thing to be laughed at—to be despised—scorned; perhaps to be pitied: but who shall dare do either? I will attempt something; something that shall astound the idle world. I will not eat, nor drink, nor sleep, till ’tis done. From Heaven I have no hope; its gates are closed against me for ever; but though my spirit should suffer eternal torture, it shall not suffer alone. I will have a goodly company around me. All friends—dear friends—excellent friends. Oh, how I hate them!’

“She continued in this manner, feeding her heart with

thoughts of vengeance, and muttering curses against those who had disturbed her dream of happiness, till a short time after sunrise; then, leaving her chamber with a stealthy step, she bent her way towards the cell of Sister Inez, which, having ascertained that its inmate was alone and asleep, she entered.

"The nuns had all assembled in the sacristy for the purpose of going to matins, all except one; and it having been discovered that Sister Inez was absent, one of the sisters was sent to her cell to learn what cause prevented her from coming down. A moment afterward a loud scream proceeding from that direction sent all the sisters into the same cell. There what a sight presented itself to the eyes of the terrified nuns! Sister Inez lay extended on her pallet quite dead. There was no mark of violence on her person; no distortion of her features. She seemed even to look more beautiful than when living, and every one imagined that she had died in her sleep. The sisters shed tears. When the abbess was told of this extraordinary circumstance, she remarked, 'It is a pity one so young and innocent should have died so soon; but there is a great consolation for you, we shall all meet her again.' The particular emphasis with which these words were spoken was lost upon the afflicted sisters, who were so shocked at the sight they had seen as to be incapable of noticing the strange appearance and wild manner of their superior. Scarcely one of them smiled the whole of the day; and, during service, many a prayer was offered up for the repose of the soul of the departed Inez.

"In the evening, while the sorrowing nuns were eating in silence in the refectory their simple meal, in the chamber of the abbess, Pedro Gonzalez was making excuses for his protracted absence. The abbess appeared satisfied with his statement.

"'It is a pity that that father of yours is so vigilant,' she said, calmly, pouring out, with unshaking hand, a glass of wine. 'I might otherwise see you more frequently. But you have had a long journey; drink, and refresh yourself.'

"'Not now, *Querida!*' he replied. 'Indeed, I am not tired; and if I was, could I not drink exhaustless draughts of love from those dear eyes?'

"'Nay, nay!' she exclaimed, coaxingly; 'if you will

not drink when a lady bids, you are but a sorry caballero. Besides, the wine is of a fresh vintage; I wish to have your opinion of its quality. Such a wine, believe me, you will never taste again. Now, drink, I beg you, drink this bumper off to my health and happiness!' She bent her glowing eyes full upon him, and they appeared eloquent with love.

" 'Santa Maria!' said he, fondly, 'if the wine were poison, I would drink it for such a look.' He raised the cup to his lips. 'But,' he continued, putting it down, 'you have not tasted a drop yourself; I cannot think of drinking before a lady.'

" 'Now, I shall be angry with you,' she replied, getting rather impatient, 'if you do not obey me.'

" 'Taste the draught first yourself, my love,' said Pedro, gallantly, 'and I will then drink, *con toda mi alma*, whatever you desire of me.'

" 'No, I will not humour you this time,' answered the abbess. 'Take the cup, and do what I request, or I will not love you.'

" 'Well, if such are the conditions, I must submit.' He again took the wine towards his lips. The abbess regarded him anxiously. 'But I would much rather,' he continued, handing the vessel towards her, 'that your mouth had blessed the cup before it reached my lips. Only just kiss the rim, and I shall be satisfied.'

" 'Well, then, there!' she exclaimed, doing as he desired with considerable impatience; 'may it drive away all your cares!'

" 'And may this rosy draught,' replied the apparently devoted lover, 'bright as your eyes, and glowing as your cheek, be pledged to your continued health and felicity!' While he emptied the goblet, the dark eyes of the abbess seemed to flash with a supernatural light.

" 'Have you drunk it all?' she asked, as he put down the cup.

" 'Every drop!' he replied.

" 'And did you find it of a good flavour?' she continued.

" 'Tolerable: but there was a taste in it I am unacquainted with,' he answered.

" 'You never tasted such wine before, and never will again. But why do you change colour, and look so uneasy?' she exclaimed. 'Is this a sample of the adoration you pro-

fess for me? So perfect a caballero as yourself must be aware that in making love there is no necessity for making wry faces. You should kneel, and not writhe your body about after that unseemly fashion. Now, I would swear by every saint in the calendar, that if Sister Inez was here, your tongue would be more eloquent, your look more enamoured, and your body in a more graceful position. You start at the name of the fair nun, Senor Pedro. Did you, then, imagine that I would tamely submit to be wronged? I have discovered your treachery, you perjured traitor! Yes!' she continued, glancing upon her victim with a fiendish malignity, 'I saw you, I heard you—your fond caresses to another still blast in my eyesight. But my hour of vengeance is come. One victim it has already secured. Ay, perfidious profligate! your partner in crime has preceded you. This morning, after you had left her, I stole into her chamber while she slept. She looked so innocent that I felt inclined to forsake my purpose, but in her dream she breathed your name, and coupled it with terms of fond affection; then, swelling with thoughts of revenge, I stifled her as she slept! You may well start. These hands did it. These little hands, that you have so often kissed and sworn by. But thou, accursed wretch! art the cause of this. How many more thou hast seduced and betrayed, I know not. Thou hast a tongue which would deceive the angels: but thou shalt deceive no more! For, thinking all equally guilty, all have received the same punishment. Hark!' she exclaimed, as a wild shriek broke upon the ear—her features were darkened with an expression quite revolting—'listen to that! Heard ye ever such music?'

"Pedro Gonzalez appeared to collect his expiring faculties for the purpose of listening. Presently a shriek, still more fearful than the first, made him forget the agony he was suffering; then another followed, then another, and then another; then arose a tumultuous cry, so full of intense suffering and deep despair, that he fancied legions of fallen spirits were howling in chorus, and that he was among them. Now it came in one wild shriek that echoed through every chamber in the convent; it was followed by three or four scarcely less loud, in which each appeared to strive for the mastery; then was heard a combination of cries, shrieks, groans, and screams—now swelling loud through every

chamber, and now dying off in the distance, then returning with additional force and increased horror. It expressed the most acute pain, agony, fear, despair, and horror, as of a burning city or a drowning ship. Now like the wailing of demons—then like the groans of the wounded. This lasted some time. Presently the screams became less loud and less general, but now and then a shriek would cleave the air, as if it was the expiring struggle of a sufferer. In time even these became more faint and less frequent, and in a short time all was still as death.

“‘They are dead!’ exclaimed the abbess, turning on the dying Pedro a gaze expressive of the deepest hatred—‘they are dead; and the same hand that shortened their existence has drugged your cup. They are gone, the guilty and the innocent, unshriven: their souls, heavy with unrepented sin, precede yours to the place of everlasting punishment by a few minutes. Your time is short; but before all sense of consciousness has left you, hear me curse you as you die. Abhorred perjurer! I feast my eyes with your sufferings! I see you writhe in your death-agony! I hate you, Pedro Gonzalez!—I hate you with a devouring, consuming hatred! May the curses of a withered heart and burning brow cling to you! May—but he’s dead! Ho, Pedro Gonzalez! you must not die yet. I have something more to say. You need not have been in such a hurry, Pedro Gonzalez! but your seductive eyes will not deceive even the worm now—your beguiling tongue will cease to prattle flattering falsehood. You will betray no more women, Pedro Gonzalez. Ha! ha!’ she exclaimed, glaring frightfully round her, her eyes flashing with all the brilliance of insanity, ‘my work is done, and bravely it is done. They are all dead—all the hated crew—and I am alone! But the abbess must now think of following her nuns. Yet what have I to do with these holy robes?’ she said, as she tore from her every vestige of her office: ‘this crucifix has no business here—this rosary I shall not want again. I leave them for the hypocrites that may follow me. Now for the wine—a good draught will soon end all.’ She drank plentifully of the poisoned liquid.

“‘Now, Pedro Gonzalez!’ she exclaimed, ‘I shall quickly overtake thee. Ah! this death is painful. I feel the torture. Santa Maria!—no, I dare not call to Heaven

for help. 'Tis dreadful—'tis agony—'tis torment. Ah! my brain is on fire! Thou gallant caballero, surely thou hast not gone on a journey before the senora thou didst promise to love so well? Ah! how I suffer! Pedro, I hate thee! Pedro, awake, and hear me yet again. Oh, this torture! it is scorching my bowels. Life is fast fleeing—it will soon be over. Ah! again it comes. Pedro, I curse!—curse!—curse!—cur—! The unfinished imprecation died upon her lips, as her soul winged its way to follow her victims, and her body sunk lifeless beside the corpse of him she had been cursing.

“When the ecclesiastics came the next morning to the convent, as they had been summoned by the abbess, to perform funeral service over the body of Sister Inez, they were horrorstruck when they discovered all the nuns extended lifeless in the refectory, and the abbess dead in her chamber, lying by the body of the canon Francisco.”

BOOK THE THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

Mephistophiles and I go to the opera.—His opinion of English musical taste, and of the philosophy of dancing.—The secret history of the great little and the little great, and other important matters.

WE went that night to the King's Theatre. It happened to be a night selected for the benefit of the fascinating Taglioni. Every box had been secured, and it was by great good fortune that I procured two seats in the stalls. The house was crowded to excess; and, apparently, every person who had the least pretension to rank or fashion might be numbered among the audience. The opera was Rossini's *Otello*, and the tumult of applause which marked the appearance of the prima donna was subsiding as we took our seats.

“It is amusing to me,” said the fictitious German prince, “to observe the taste of the English for music, as exempli-

fied at the present moment. Here is a soprano, singing miserably out of tune ; yet she is applauded to the skies ; and the more the tenor indulges in intricate and unmeaning cadences, the louder is the admiration exhibited by his audience. The manner, too, in which they get up this music, would disgrace the smallest theatre in Germany. With a company most extravagantly paid, they seldom attempt anything but some half a dozen of the most hackneyed operas of Rossini, and of one or two of his least talented imitators ; and, frequently as they perform these, they are seldom perfect. The orchestra, which boasts of so many great names, native and foreign, do not appear to understand the value of expression. What they are used to they play with a mechanical correctness ; but when they attempt one of Mozart's overtures, it is sure to be played in the wrong time, without precision, energy, feeling, or that due respect to light and shade which constitutes one of the greatest charms in instrumental performance. As for the chorus, they are completely inefficient. But how can they be otherwise, when, by the parsimony of the manager, persons are engaged who know little, if anything, of music, at a miserable allowance, which is seldom, if ever, paid ?"

"I have observed something of this," I replied ; "for having been used to the perfect manner in which the most difficult musical productions are performed in the German cities, I cannot help viewing the contrast I see here."

"But the Germans are a musical people," observed my companion. "So are the English," said I : "they are as fond of good music as any people in the world ; and the most convincing instance of this is in the rapidity with which the best foreign operas become popular in this country. The fault is, that the English professors are not practical musicians ; for they will not devote that time to the study of the instrument and the voice which will give them the means of excelling. This accounts for persons with half-cultivated voices being so frequently thrust before the public ; and this is, in a great measure, the cause of the inefficiency of our bands."

"Then how do you account for the want of originality in your composers ?" asked Mephistophiles with a sneer.

"I must acknowledge the want of genius of those native professors whose compositions are most generally known,"

I replied ; " but I believe, notwithstanding, that there is much genius of the highest order in the country, which is only waiting a favourable opportunity for making itself conspicuous."

" Now the truth is," said he, " that all the channels of communication with the public are in the hands of persons calling themselves composers, who have long possessed a monopoly of their art, with very slight talent for any such office. These are very unwilling to make way for cleverer men ; and as their superiors are to a great degree unknown, without any interest to back their qualifications, the public are doomed to listen to trash of the vilest kind."

" We have produced many clever musicians," I observed, " and I cannot see what should prevent our continuing to do the same."

" The principal object in the path of British genius is your senseless affectation of everything foreign," he replied. " Let any rascally fiddler or singer come from Kamtschatka, or New Zealand, and you all run in crowds to hear him, while native talent is neglected or despised. At your numerous concerts not only are nearly all the compositions performed foreign, but they are of the worst class of foreign productions—the merest milk and water of the Italian school. To such an extent does this ridiculous fashion predominate, that four ugly Jews, who lived in the neighbourhood of Whitechapel by the manufacture of cigars, and whose vocal fame would never have extended this side of Aldgate pump, were caught hold of by a needy adventurer, dressed in a costume which was never seen in any part of the world: their cadaverous cheeks were ornamented with huge black whiskers, for which many a horse's tail had been robbed ; and after having been taught some melodies which were written for the purpose, they were let loose upon the town as the Siberian Brothers, or some such name ; however, so popular did they become with their foreign-loving dupes, that in a short time they made the fortune of the speculator, and realized a sufficient sum to enable them to open a divan in the most fashionable part of the town, where those who like may smoke bad cigars, and be charmed with Siberian melodies manufactured in London."

Between the acts the curtain rose for a divertisement, in

which the incomparable Taglioni made her appearance. She was greeted with the loudest demonstrations of popularity from her numerous patrons, which she acknowledged by several graceful courtesies.

"Behold!" said Mephistophiles, directing my attention to the evolutions of the dancer, "the progress of civilization. If all this were not so graceful, it would be indecent; and that such an exhibition has a moral tendency, is more than doubtful. Look at that young girl in the pit! she has seen sufficient to crimson her face, neck, and shoulders with the blush of shame, and she hides her head from a sight which has shocked her sense of decency. There is no affectation there. She is an innocent girl, fresh from the country, who never saw a ballet in her life. Yet all the rest, man, woman, and child, gaze on delighted. Every glass is raised, the more closely to watch the motions of the figurante. Look! she makes a succession of vaults; and her scanty drapery, flying above her hips, discloses to her enraptured admirers the beauty of her limbs. A thousand hands beat each other in approbation. Now she pirouettes, and observe the tumult of applause which follows. See! she stands on her left foot on the point of her great toe nail, extending her right leg till the top of her foot is in a parallel line with the crown of her head. In this position she bends, with an appearance of the greatest ease, till her body nearly touches the ground; and then gradually rises, with the same infinite grace, amid enthusiastic bravos and ecstatic plaudits. Now on tiptoe, her right leg still extended, she moves slowly round, liberally extending to all her patrons within sight the most favourable opportunity of scrutinizing the graces of her figure, while the whole house testify their infinite gratification at the sight by every species of applause. Again she comes from the back of the stage, turning round and round with the speed of a tetotum, but with an indescribable and fascinating grace that seems to turn the head of every young man in the theatre. During the storm of approbation which ensues, she stands near the footlights, smiling, courtesying, and looking as modest as an angel. Then comes Perrot, who is as much the idol of the ladies as Taglioni is the goddess of the gentlemen. He leaps about as if his feet were made of Indian-rubber, and spins round as if he intended to bore a hole with his toe

in the floor of the stage. Then a little pantomime love business takes place between the danseur and the danseuse : they twirl away, and glide along, and hold eloquent discourse with their pliant limbs ; and the affair ends by the gentleman clasping the lady round her delicate waist, while he, bending his body in the most graceful attitude, so that his head shall come under her left arm, looks up in apparent ecstasy into her smiling face, as the lady, raised high above him on the extreme point of her left foot, extends her right limb at right angles with her body, and looks down admiringly upon her companion. Thus grouped the curtain drops, and every one cries ' Bravo,' thumps the floor with his stick, or beats his palms together, till such a din is raised as is absolutely deafening."

" She is a charming dancer," I observed.

" Yes !" he replied, " she understands the philosophy of her art better than any of her contemporaries : it is to throw around sensuality such a colouring of refinement as will divest it of its grossness. For this she is paid a hundred pounds a night, and is allowed two benefits in the season, which generally average a thousand pounds each. While you are thus liberal to a dancer, some of the worthiest of your ministers of religion receive about fifty pounds per annum, for wearing out their lives for the good of your souls ; and many of your most exalted men of genius are left to starve. Such is the consistency of human nature !"

After a pause in the conversation, occasioned by the singing of Rubini, it was again renewed by Mephistophiles:

" Let us see who are here," said he, as he took a survey of the boxes. " Oh, there is the Countess of Beauregard entering her box, near the third chandelier on the right. Her personal attractions are still considerable ; and in Dublin, a city celebrated for the beauty of its women, the countess and her sister were allowed to be among the most distinguished ornaments of the viceregal court. She has recently produced several novels, edits a fashionable periodical, and occasionally writes very pretty verses. A little higher up, with that careworn face and venerable head, is the premier, from whose mind the scene before him cannot remove the impression left by the cares of office, and the activity of the opposition.

" A little to the left, distinguished by those pallid features

and black ringlets, sits the Countess Cabriolet. When very young, she obtained considerable reputation as an actress; and her name has been frequently before the public in conjunction with that of Colonel Greenroom, since, for his great virtues, elevated to the peerage, with the title of Lord Bunnlove. The dark, bewhiskered-looking youth, sitting behind her ladyship, as if unconscious of the worth of his choice, is her honourable and noble lord, at one time a respectable member of the Four-in-hand Club. Down here, nearer the stage, looking as melancholy as an 'unstrung lute,' sits his grace the Duke of Leatherhead. He is the great object of ambition to all manœuvring mothers and unmarried daughters. But he is obliged to continue a bachelor, for the best of reasons—because he dare not marry. Having no legal right to the title he possesses, he is allowed by the claimant to retain it solely on the condition that he keeps himself single. He is talking to Lord Mulberry, a nobleman who was thought to be qualified for a governor of an extensive colony, and afterward for the representative of royalty in an adjacent island, because he has written one or two novels of the Silverfork school.

"In that box below the stage are several young men about town, with some of whom you are acquainted. That individual, with dark mustaches and whiskers, is Noodle Buggy. The next, with fair round cheeks, and a great curly head of light hair, looking like a cauliflower run to seed, is Lord Fortunatus Fitzpoodle: he is conversing with George Wordwell, the son of a Yorkshire baronet, upon the attractions of a figurante. Near him is young Well-bred Button, who, rapidly as he appears to be talking, will never make so good a speaker as his father. The listeners are no other than John Fister, a gentleman of great notoriety, but small fame, and Viscount Lupin, your aunt Brambleberry's hopeful son, and the friend of every pretty actress in distress. These are all patrons of the opera, or rather of the opera-dancers. Great men behind the scenes. Chuckers under chins of smiling figurantes; and green-room gossipers in bad French, and worse Italian."

"Your description," said I, laughing, "though somewhat exaggerated, is, I believe, very near the truth. There are hundreds of these fashionable idlers to be found dangling

about the stage, waiting to be honoured with a smile from the despotic favourite."

"And getting amazingly laughed at by her for their folly," he replied. "But puppyism here is an epidemic: one infects another; and the malady is seldom cured till the patient has been bled so freely that he no longer possesses the power of encouraging the growth of the disease. You see that portly-looking woman," said Mephistophiles, directing my attention to a lady "of a certain age," who sat in a box on the grand tier, in a superb dress, brilliant with jewels; "that is the Duchess of Bullion. Her grace's life has been a fortunate one. Her parents were persons in an humble but respectable class of society; and her history bears a strong resemblance, in many of its incidents, to that of a beautiful Englishwoman of a more immaculate age, to whose commiseration for the sufferings of a poor disabled veteran, who solicited her charity in the streets, you owe the erection of one of the noblest of your public institutions—I mean Chelsea College. At an early period of her life she appeared on the stage, for which she had some talent; and attracted the attention of a great capitalist, who made her his wife. He died 'by the merest accident in the world,' leaving her sole heiress of his immense wealth; and her great riches induced a poor duke, young enough to be her son, and wise enough to be her husband, to raise her to the title of duchess. Just above is the Countess St. Maronio, whose fiery visage and black hair once attracted more attention than they do now. There sits his sublime highness the Duke of Parmesan, taking his coffee, while his sapient and obsequious companion, Colonel Toady, is listening to the glorious commonplaces which fall from his *master's* lips. You see that youth, with black mustaches, standing in the alley with his back against the boxes, his coat thrown back, his white waistcoat spread open, exposing that brilliant chain of the purest Brummagem gold; and while his red hand, liberally adorned with paste rings, is drawn through the greasy curls of his coarse hair, with his glass fixed to his eye, he is staring with vulgar impudence at the beautiful Mrs. Shoebrad, the once charming actress, Maria Branch: he is a pickpocket, and is watching an opportunity to glide his hand into the coat-tail of his next neighbour, the treasurer to a mendicity society; who has in his purse a sum in

gold which he intended to bestow in relieving the distresses of the poor, but which is destined to enrich the pocket of the honest gentleman at his side. Yonder in that stall, near the orchestra, relating some coarse jest about a popular actress, whose favourite he has been, stands the illustrious Tom Stager, a member of the senate—another patron of the drama—another great man among sceneshifters and supernumeraries.”

“What a charming effect is produced by the boxes being so well filled!” said I, interrupting my companion. “Look! tier over tier in this vast circumference thronged with the loveliest faces that ever smiled in happiness. What a glorious collection! It is impossible for any man, let him be native or foreign born, to come here on such a night as this without feeling convinced that English women are brightest of all beneath the sun. So much expression, so much grace, so much modesty; countenances in which the sweetness of humanity has overpowered all its bitterness; forms that possess all that is true in poetry without the least sign of the degrading realities of life, were never before congregated in so small a space. The Mohammedan would call this his paradise, for he could not imagine houris more fair than those by whom we are surrounded.”

“Stuff!” exclaimed Mephistophiles, contemptuously. “The women are fair enough, to be sure; but without Carson and other people of the same tribe, what would they be?”

“They inherit too many attractions from nature to owe much obligation to art,” I replied. “The milliner may make great transformations, but not with such as these. The noble born would still look noble in a russet gown. Dress is, in point of fact, but the frame of the picture; a bad painting may be improved in appearance by a rich moulding, but the works of the illustrious would still retain their value in a case of painted deal.”

“Vastly fine!” said my companion, sneeringly. “It is a pity those for whom you are the advocate cannot be brought to acknowledge the truth of your argument. What an immense saving there would be in jewels, in silks, and satins, in lace and embroidery, to say nothing of perfumes and cosmetics. There would be no more long bills at Howell

and James's. Truefitt's fascinating ringlets would find no customers. Waterloo House would be deserted."

"I think the form would look equally graceful in more humble habiliments."

"That were not padded," said Mephistophiles, emphatically.

"And the hand would seem equally fair without the rings."

"But would it attract as much attention?" asked the fictitious prince with a sneer.

"Possibly not," I replied; "but although sumptuous apparel is much worn by the noble and the fashionable, the lady of good taste may always be distinguished by the air of elegant refinement that breathes around her less costly attire."

"Fudge!" exclaimed my companion; "the love of ornament is the ruling passion of the sex. So it has ever been, and so it ever will be. There's not a woman that lives who does not regard the matter of dress as a most important consideration. Even the old and decrepit, or the young and the unseemly, will try on a dashing bonnet or a handsome shawl with a flutter of the heart that speaks plainer than a thousand words the delight it occasions. This is partly the result of education and habit. The first toy a girl generally gets is a doll, and the first thing she learns is to dress it in the most attractive manner. These infantile idols are kept clothed in rich vestments, and the little worshipper learns the value of such externals by their influence upon herself. To aid this impression, the mother, the nurse, and the governess use their best endeavours, by making a new sash or a pretty cap the most desirable rewards, and the resumption of a cast-off frock or a soiled pair of shoes the most dreaded punishments. As the child increases in years, the knowledge that superiority in dress is the passport to general admiration gains strength. The girl views it as a means of ensuring attention, and the woman relies upon its assistance to strengthen her power over the other sex, or increase her influence with her own. Dress is the pivot on which every feminine action must turn. The prettiest infant would appear a stranger to its mamma without its lace cap and muslin robe. The bride would be unknown to her friends, in a *respectable* marriage, unless 'clad in

robes of virgin white.' It would be impossible for the widow to grieve for her lost husband, if the mourning was not 'becoming.' And no old lady of a good family can be expected to sleep soundly in her coffin when her grave-clothes are unfashionably made."

"That dress exercises an influence over the minds of a large proportion of the sex cannot be denied," said I; "but I am not inclined to think that its rule is so universally despotic as you assert."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mephistophiles, scornfully.

"Women, in my opinion, have not yet attained that position in society which would allow them to exert the influence of intellect and sympathy without the assistance of artificial aids. The very atmosphere they breathe is artificial; the forms of sociality, the apparent objects of life, are clothed with an artificial restraint. The love of ornament can only be a vice when it leads to vicious ends; and even granting the general possession of this desire, I certainly shall not condemn harshly when I see around me the pleasing effects it produces. How charming does Lady Tilbury appear in her present costume! Could anything be imagined more appropriate to her style of beauty than the dress she wears? Look at the Duchess of Tartan; has she not so garnished her loveliness as to produce a *tableau-vivant*, which could not be formed of other materials? Turn which way I will, I find nothing but attraction. I really think, despite the fame French women have acquired, that the best class of English women dress in better taste than any class of women in any country."

"Wonderful!" muttered my companion.

"As for any rivalry in personal attractions, such an idea is quite out of the question."

"Is it possible?" inquired the prince with affected interest.

"In France it is a rarity to see a female possessed of a countenance and figure faultless in expression and symmetry. Many pretty women may be met with; but the face in which intellectual greatness breathes out of the most perfect arrangement of feature must be long sought for, if ever found. In Germany there is much to attract."

"That I am aware you have discovered, most learned student," said Mephistophiles with a smile of peculiar mean-

ing ; " but what say you of the warm-hearted and fire-eyed bella-donnas of Italy and Spain ? "

" Their power cannot be disputed, nor their attractiveness," I replied ; " but let it be prejudice, or let it be what it may, the warmth of their generous natures does not exert over me that power which I have felt when under the influence of the frigid purity of my modest countrywomen."

The fictitious prince laughed in a low scornful tone, that could scarcely be overheard, but which to my ears sounded loud and harsh as the clang of a cracked gong.

" Really, my noble master," said he, contemptuously, " you have read me a most edifying discourse, and that it will be to our mutual advantage is not to be doubted. The virtue of woman is a fine subject, and none could be better acquainted with its merits than the handsome student of Gottingen ; and, moreover, I am greatly inclined to imagine, from this most moral conversation, that the pupil of Mephistophiles is on the high-road to sanctification. As it is stated that ' the greater the sinner the greater the saint,' what a full-blown specimen of holiness you are likely to become ! "

" If ever I should attain a high degree of moral excellence," said I, regardless of the sarcasm, " it will be through the instrumentality of some pure and gentle being, whose virtues would neutralize my crimes, and whose love would lead my evil spirit out of the hate in which it has been nursed."

" Most excellently said," remarked my companion, as he fixed his hot eyes upon me in a manner that made me tremble ; " but you forget a little affair between us that puts such feminine interference out of the question."

I quailed beneath his gaze.

" And you forget, too, the lofty wishes that made us such good friends. Surely you have not lost all ambition ? Your proud desires are not already satisfied ? There are enjoyments in the world yet which you have not tasted, and can, therefore, form no conception of the pleasures they bestow. Has beauty lost her influence ? Does fame offer no inducement to exertion ? Has political power no attraction for you ? "

" I prize them all ! " I eagerly exclaimed ; and visions of coming greatness seemed passing rapidly before my eyes.

" Then all shall be yours," said Mephistophiles : " see

you this multitude of the beautiful ?—their smiles await you : yonder is the princely hero of a hundred fights—there the honoured author of imperishable volumes :—your fame shall exceed theirs. Around us sit the noble, the rich, the powerful, the learned, and the lovely :—as they are, shall each remain under your government.”

My heart throbbed with a feeling of pride that appeared something more than human. These flattering prospects filled me with a sort of intoxication that deprived me of the reflection which should have taught me their vanity. I believed and trusted. And while my crafty associate was eyeing me with a smile of scorn, I gave myself up to the ambitious dreams in which I had so often indulged. The prize for which I had toiled,—the object of my long and anxious studies,—the reward that was intended to make me forget the dreadful perils I had encountered,—seemed about to fall into my grasp.

From these glorious visions I was awakened by a well-known voice addressing me by name from the alley between the stalls and the pit.

CHAPTER II.

My friend the exquisite.—He introduces me to Lady Julia.—I recognise Dora in an opera-box, and proceed with her, in company with the Marchioness of Brambleberry, to the residence of the latter, where she is staying on a visit.—My reflections upon perusing a letter from my cousin.—Mephistophiles doubts her sincerity.

It was Captain Fitz-Grey, of the guards, my correspondent and Eton friend. He was now the leading exquisite upon town : the most fashionable, the most affected, and the best-dressed man in society ; talked in a most unintelligible dialect, half French and half English ; and looked with contempt upon persons and things unhonoured by fashion.

“Ha ! Herbert, *mon cher ami* ! How do ? Devilish glad to see you. Pointed you out to Lady Julia Alderney from her box, and her ladyship is much taken with your *air distingué*. But I must introduce you.”

Our mutual congratulations were scarcely over, and I had introduced him to Mephistophiles, when, as we were passing into the lobby, he said to me, examining my dress very narrowly, "Gad, it's lucky you're so *présentable*; and your friend the prince, with the infernal long name, bears about him all the *empressement* of an accomplished continental. Lady Julia is one of the fair despots of *haut ton*; a lady patroness; in fact, a person whom not to know would keep yourself unknown. Her lord is a politician and an agriculturist, always busying himself with state affairs or farming matters: he is much older than she is, yet leaves her almost entirely to herself. By Jove, she is a splendid creature! but as proud as be damned, and as virtuous as the devil. You must both belong to her set, if you have any desire to be ranked among our *élégants* and *merveilleux*. She will patronise you; make you her *protégé*, and invest you with an *éclat* which nothing else could bestow. I think she rather admires your *contour*; if so, you may consider yourself *un homme à bonnes fortunes*: but you are just the sort of fellow to create an impression; there is nothing of *gaucherie* in your appearance, or *brusquerie* in your manner; all is *comme il faut*."

Fitz-Grey chatted on in a similar commonplace fashion till we entered her ladyship's box. It contained two ladies, Lady Julia, and her young cousin Lady Mary Dimpleton, a lovely and sprightly girl, in her second season, who were engaged in conversation with Lord Counterpoint and the Marquis of Foreground. The ceremony of introduction was scarcely over before the conversation became general; it was carried on sometimes in Italian, sometimes in French, and occasionally in English. Nothing could exceed the easy and high-bred manners which the fictitious prince assumed. He conversed with Lord Counterpoint upon music, with the Marquis of Foreground upon paintings, described the state of German literature to Lady Julia, related amusing anecdotes to Lady Mary, and eulogized the state of Parisian society with Fitz-Grey. As for myself, I was not idle. There was something in the appearance of Lady Julia that interested me deeply. To a commanding figure she united features of exalted beauty. None could approach her without feeling in a slight degree awed by her presence. Yet there was a winning fascination in her manners that quickly oblit-

erated any feeling, save that of admiration, likely to be created by her first impression upon a stranger. She was not more than five-and-twenty—beautiful and unsuspected; a fine specimen of aristocratic beauty and aristocratic virtue. Her spotless character was so shrouded in a mantle of honourable pride, that amid many contaminations it remained pure; and her mind was of that lofty and superior nature, that it retained its brilliance undimmed amid the clouds and darkness through which it shone.

The two noblemen took their leave, after having promised Lady Alderney to pay her a visit on the following evening.

"I hope also to have the pleasure of seeing you, Mr. Herbert," said her ladyship, addressing me; "and if your friend Prince Völligdunkel Gross-Siegelbewahrer will honour me with his company, I expect you will bring him."

The invitation was accepted by Mephistophiles and myself with many acknowledgments.

"But, Captain Fitz-Grey," said she, turning to the captain, who was conversing earnestly with Lady Mary in an undertone, "you were at the Countess of Rackrent's ball last night—how did it go off?"

"Why," replied the young officer, "I may answer your ladyship's question with the words used by Voltaire, when asked a similar interrogative in a Parisian ball-room, '*La musique est passable, et les femmes sont passées*,' if I substitute the past tense for the present."

"Come, come, sir, I must have no scandal: Lady Rackrent is my particular friend," said Lady Julia, laughingly.

"*Milles pardones*," he observed. "The very reason why she should be sacrificed."

"If such is the case, captain, we must not be too careful in our treatment of your character when you are absent," exclaimed the youthful Lady Mary with indescribable archness.

"I should be but too happy," he replied, gallantly, "to suffer in such hands. But *en vérité* I have no *malice pré-pense*, I merely follow the *système de guerre* used by the world. At Lady Rackrent's I found myself in *mauvaise compagnie*, among people with whom one can amuse one's self *pour le moment*, but whom the next moment one would consign in all friendliness to *tous les diables de l'enfer*. One man is an *encanaillé*, another *mal habillé*, the third an

ennuyé. As for the women—but I will say nothing of them now. Such parties are, however, very different from your ladyship's *soirées*, where everything is *en règle*—all *couleur de rose*. Where one meets with no *parvenus*, and has to endure none of those *désagréments* which are to be met with in mixed societies."

"My *soirées* are much obliged to you for your favourable opinion; but don't you think, Mr. Herbert, he is flattering the present at the expense of the absent?" asked Lady Julia of me.

"From what I have heard of your ladyship's good taste, as exemplified on all occasions," I replied, "I believe my friend speaks the truth."

"If it is only for the first time," added Lady Mary, with a most malicious smile.

"Ha! but I forgot you are not entitled to give an opinion," observed Lady Alderney: "after to-morrow night I shall expect more sincerity." Then dexterously changing the conversation, her ladyship said, as she directed her lunettes towards the stage, "You are a connoisseur of these matters, Captain Fitz-Grey. Cannot you amuse the prince by initiating him into all the mysteries of the ballet? You can, I know, discourse most learnedly of *pirouettes*, and *entrechats*, *chassés*, and *tours de force*, *petits battemens*, and *coups d'aplomb*."

"Your ladyship does me too much honour," replied the guardsman, noway disconcerted by this raillery. "Such charming *badinage* must always be considered *à propos*, especially when administered with the *délicatesse* developed on the present occasion."

"Who is that beautiful creature in the Marchioness of Brambleberry's box?" asked Lady Mary, with unfeigned admiration.

"Charming countenance!" exclaimed Lady Julia.

"Tasteful *coiffure*, elegant *tournure*, *tout ensemble* unexceptionable," remarked the captain, with critical minuteness.

"Who is she?" inquired both ladies at once with much eagerness.

"Though generally *au courant du jour*," said Fitz-Grey, with some *chagrin*, "here I can give you no information. I have observed her glass directed this way, making a *recon-*

naissance during the last half-hour ; but as my *amour propre* was not strong enough to allow me to consider myself the *objet intéressant* of the lady's scrutiny, I did not pay her much attention. Herbert, *mon ami !*" he exclaimed, as I had been for the last five minutes too much engaged with what I observed on the stage to notice the conversation of my companions, "are you sufficiently *au fait* at recognising countenances to inform these *belles curieuses* the name of the young lady in the large box opposite, *au premier ?*"

I looked in the direction I was desired, and there observed, watching me very attentively, features that I quickly recognised as those of my fair pupil and affectionate cousin, Dora Melcombe. In a few moments I was at her side.

If she could have spoken, her tongue never could have expressed with the eloquence of her looks the delight with which my presence seemed to inspire her. I felt that there was no need of words, while the eyes interpreted her feelings so well. By a wise arrangement of the laws of nature, when by any accident there occurs a deprivation of one or more of the natural properties of the human structure, the application of some of the remaining functions, in a short period, is made to supply whatever is defective in the organization. The man who is deprived of sight is enabled, by the continual use he is obliged to make of the organs of feeling and hearing, to form in his mind a vision equally serviceable with the one which he can no longer employ. He hears the voice, and sees the individual—he touches the *objet*, and knows its form, texture, and properties. So the person who has lost the faculty of speech finds in the varying expression of the features, the application of signs and the employment of writing, all the advantages of the lingual organ. She discourses by gestures ; and speaks the sense of her thoughts by the wisdom of her looks. It is in some measure true that there are organs, the loss of which can never be completely repaired. The deaf man can form only a remote idea of music, and the blind man must possess an erroneous conception of colours. But the deaf can observe the effects produced on others by sounds ; can read explanations of their influence, combinations, and variety ; and, from continual observation, may gain a tolerably correct notion of their causes ; and the blind can have explained to them the philosophy of colours, and by such explanations have

their conceptions of a painting, brought much nearer to the truth. One blind man said, that from the touch of a piece of crimson cloth, that colour appeared to him like the sound of a trumpet : he was not so far off from a correct description as may be imagined ; for as he could not compare a visual object with visual things, knowing nothing of the sense of sight, he made a comparison with an effect with which he was familiar, and by that meant to express that his notion of the colour was, that it was most conspicuous, powerful, and warlike. In the affliction under which Dora was suffering, the remedying hand of nature was beautifully conspicuous. Though the most important source of expression was destroyed, it was conveyed into other channels which were found to answer all the purposes of speech. Her clear transparent complexion appeared to have acquired the properties of a mirror, which reflected in the most eloquent manner the sweet feelings of her heart, and the excellent purposes of her mind. To make those reflections more apparent, and to clothe them with a brighter loveliness, her eyes seemed to throw around them a light of such radiant intelligence that the most ignorant, and the most obtuse, might discover in her features meaning and inspiration. Those who had enjoyed frequent opportunity of studying her means of expression, found no difficulty in understanding every thought she attempted to explain ; and even strangers knew the sense written in those fair characters, though they were scarcely capable of interpreting all its meaning : I, to whom every variation of feature had become familiar, when in her society never observed her deficiency of speech. To me she seemed to speak in a language far superior to that conveyed through the agency of words. Her face was like some rare illuminated missal, brilliant in beauty and eloquent in holiness.

On my entrance I had been gladly welcomed by the marchioness, who had often seen me before my departure for Göttingen ; and as she pressed me very much to accompany her, I escorted them home in their carriage. I supped at her mansion in Belgrave-square, with no more appearance of ceremony than if I had been one of the family ; and she told me to consider her house as much my home as possible, till I had found a town residence of my own. Nothing could exceed the cordiality of Lady Brambleberry's manner

towards me ; she wished me to stay till her lord returned, who was every moment expected from a late debate in the House of Peers ; hoped that her son, Lord Lupin, would cultivate my friendship ; and promised to procure for me a ticket for Almack's for the ensuing Wednesday. Finding that there was no opportunity of having any private communication with Dora, I took leave of the ladies, promising soon to repeat my visit.

I retired to rest, musing on the eventful circumstances which had taken place within the last few days. I had purchased at a sacrifice it was too late now to repent, the power of realizing all my wishes. As yet that power had given me nothing but inquietude. The untimely death of Francisca appeared as the first drop of bitterness I had tasted, while drinking of a cup I had resolved to drain to the dregs. Yet, as I thought to myself, why was I to blame ? I had neglected her, it is true, but I had offered speedy atonement ; and a man, when he has committed a fault, can do no more than endeavour to make reparation. She refused to accept my repentance, and in a moment of irritation committed self-destruction. In this I had done no wrong. Why should I make myself uneasy ? With such reasoning I frequently stifled the upbraidings of remorse : but it was not always that I succeeded ; for when the soul becomes its own accuser, it is difficult to form for one's self a justification. At any rate, I thought it was useless to annoy myself about an accident, which could not now be prevented. The world was open before me. I had only to select its enjoyments, and they would become mine. After some hesitation, I resolved, as a first step, to commence the pursuit of pleasure, doubting not to find the blooming goddess, arrayed in all her attractions, in the brilliant temples of fashion. I awoke from a strange dream, in which the dazzling gaze of Lady Julia was sometimes changed into the confiding smile of Dora, till both melted away beneath the sightless glance of the dead Francisca.

I had scarcely quitted my bedroom before a letter was delivered to me in my cousin's handwriting ; and, from the length of its contents, I was certain the dear girl must have sat up the best part of the night to write it.

"Belgrave-square.

"MY DEAR COUSIN,

"As I had no opportunity last night of communicating to you many things with which I wish you to be acquainted, I now sit down to write them. I saw you as soon as you entered the theatre, and scarcely lost sight of you once till you recognised me. How well you are looking! Indeed, you are so wonderfully improved I should scarcely have known you, had I not reason to possess a good memory. I only arrived in town two days since, and I am not to come out, as it is called, till next Monday, when Lady Brambleberry is going to get up a magnificent party for the occasion. I would much rather have remained at Melcombe; but, possibly, if I had done so, I should not have seen you; besides, my father desires me to show myself in public, and my aunt is so good that I really ought not to be discontented. However, I cannot occasionally help wishing myself back with you, under the shade of those dear beeches, watching the gambols of the wild squirrels; or listening to you, in the clear starlight of the quiet evening, discoursing with poetic eloquence upon the wondrous truths of astronomy. There is to me a charm in those times, which seems to grow stronger as time removes me from them. It is a sweet power, that of memory; a holy, tranquillizing, felicitous influence. It appears as if, when we recur to the past, the mind is possessed of some magnetic property; for immediately all our thoughts cling to that one subject upon which it is engaged.

"Lady Brambleberry would take me to the opera; and although then I was not very desirous of going, I am now glad I was induced to do so; for had I staid away I should not have enjoyed the pleasure of seeing you. It was a real gratification—the more intense because most unexpected; and when I found myself once more sitting by your side, and listening to your voice, occasionally I could scarcely help fancying it was some dear delightful dream. You have been absent a long time. At first when you left me, I chronicled the duration of your absence by the succession of wild flowers. I saw the snowdrop give way to the primrose, the primrose die as the violet began to bloom, and the violet fade when the cowslip flourished; and as these sweet remembrances were erased from the broad

tablet of Nature, I found others in the falling leaves. But I loved most in the deep solitude of night to watch the bright stars shining through the transparent air, and the largest and brightest I would always fancy was your star. Then what a delight it was to feel that shining planet gazing down upon me, just in that mild kind manner that you have done, dear Vincent, when pleased with your little pupil ! All this you will think very simple and foolish, and perhaps when I am as old and as wise as you I shall think the same ; but there is so much pleasure to me even in the remembrance of these fancies, that I cannot consent to give them up merely because they are simple.

“ I did not attend much either to the opera or the ballet last night ; for I was so anxious to attract your attention that I could think of nothing else, yet what I did see and hear appeared remarkably beautiful. - I am so very fond of music that I could listen an eternity ; but to me there is no music like that which comes from the voice of one dear to you. I have heard since nothing that pleased me to the extent which those songs did you used to sing to me in your happiest moments. You must not think this preference unreasonable ; for your voice was so rich and harmonious, and you sung with so much real feeling and expression, that any stranger having then heard you would express my opinion. No ! there cannot be in music any sounds so expressive as those which interpret to a devoted listener the feelings of the kind heart which gave them origin. I have hung upon such sounds till all earthly associations faded beneath my feet. I arose upon wings of gladness, through an atmosphere of poetry and music, till I seemed a blissful inhabitant of the harmonious heavens. Will such times return ? Will the same voice, in the same tone, express the same sentiments ? It is almost anticipating too much to hope so, yet I do hope so. That voice haunts my happiest dreams, and without it for me there will never be any blissful reality. Why, then, may I not hope it ? Only because I do not consider myself worthy of being so blessed ; yet it shall not be my fault if I do not obtain such happiness, for I will try to deserve it.

“ I expect my father in town in about a week. He is busy forming a new plantation at the back of the house, where the peacocks used to be so fond of going. Before

Lady Honoria left him, he took but little interest in the prosperity of his estate ; but lately he has done nothing but look over plans of improvement, listen to the designs of architects, visit his tenants, and busy himself with attending to the wants and wishes of his dependents and neighbours. He has promised me to erect a schoolhouse for the accommodation of the poor children in the adjoining parishes ; and he has also decided upon founding a set of almshouses at the end of the village, for the aged and infirm. Really it is quite gratifying to see him inclined to do so much good. I am always grieved when I see people having the power in their hands of conferring benefits upon their less fortunate fellow-creature fail to bring it into operation. Now, through my father's goodness, as I am allowed the privilege of being of service to those who are in want of assistance, I shall be quite unhappy if I let any opportunity escape of conferring relief upon the suffering and the destitute. You, dearest Vincent ! have more knowledge of the world than I ; therefore, I wish you would direct me how to apply my power of doing good, so that it may be exercised to the greatest advantage.

“ I am sure Lord Melcombe will be exceedingly glad to see you. He has mentioned you to me several times since I last wrote, and always in the most flattering terms. You cannot imagine what pleasure it gives me to hear your praises, more especially when my dear father is himself the eulogist. I think there cannot be anything more gratifying than to hear two persons, both of whom you dearly honour and esteem, speak to you privately in eloquent commendation of each other's virtues. It gives you a good opinion of human nature. I often think that the individual will enjoy the greatest happiness who is enabled to see and appreciate the worth of those by whom he is surrounded ; and while I have near me so many estimable beings, I cannot fail of being supremely happy. Indeed I am most thankful to the Giver of all goodness for having blessed me with so many kind and excellent friends ; for, although he has visited me with what the world considers a great affliction, but which I only consider a privation when it draws upon me the observation of strangers, has he not conferred upon me a thousand blessings, each of which would counterbalance the evil proceeding from my misfortune ? I have every reason to be

well satisfied with my condition ; and I never shall feel less contented while I enjoy that affectionate interest which you, dear Vincent, have hitherto taken in my existence. I often think what might have been my present situation had you not, fortunately I call it, ridden over me when a child ; for that accident, slight as it was, led to the most important results. It created in you an anxiety for my fate, which led to a knowledge of my desolate condition. Your generous heart was moved. You taught me all good and noble truths ; opened for me sources of comfort and happiness by which I have never since been disappointed ; and made me what I am. Suppose I had never seen you, and had grown up neglected and despised, my father could not have felt much affection for a daughter ignorant of every principle of right and wrong, and would rather have retained my imperfections in their natural obscurity, than have brought them before the attention of the world. He now takes pride in what is but the result of your solicitude, and loves me with all the earnestness of a fond and delighted parent. To you, then, how much must I be indebted !

“ Be sure that you make your appearance as frequently as possible in Belgrave-square, for upon such occasions there is the only chance of your having unreserved communication with me. The marquis you will find a very pleasant sort of man. Lord Lupin I have not seen. My aunt’s kindness I can only mention in the most grateful terms, for I have been treated with the most friendly attention during the short time I have been beneath her roof. Yet, good as she is, and pleasant as her society must be, I am fearful they will be lost upon me if you do not come and teach me how to appreciate their excellence. Let me see you soon, and believe me,

“ Your sincere and devoted

“ DORA.

“ P.S. After you left us, Lady Brambleberry said many handsome things about you, and seemed very much delighted with your appearance. I was certain she would be. No one who has had an opportunity of discovering your good qualities can fail of being pleased with their possessor. You must come here, and be our companion ; attend us in our rides, visits, and purchases. It will be so very pleasant to have you near me upon all occasions, that I shall almost

fancy the joyous past has returned, and brought back all those delights which make it such an Eden of the memory. Even with you I do not think I should feel in this great city so much at home as I was when we were chasing the deer over the green knolls of our beautiful park : but I cannot say ; it is more than probable that you could reconcile me to any change. I want to see all that is worth seeing here, and I much wish you would take the trouble of showing me what are called the lions. Will you ? You used to tell me, that anything I required you would immediately perform. I do not know whether you have the same inclination to give me pleasure ; but, indeed, I have the same desire to receive it at your hands. Let me see you, if possible, in the course of the day.

“ I must now come to a conclusion ; not because I have nothing more to write—oh no ! but in consequence of my space being completely filled. I am afraid, after all, that my letter will fail to inspire you with those pleasurable feelings I desire it to create ; but with all sincerity of heart, I hope you may be gratified with its contents. Good-night, dear Vincent ! I have only room left to write, God bless you ! ”

I read the letter of this simple-minded girl with sensations I can scarcely describe. They were an amalgamation of pleasure, caused by her devotedness, with untold agony when I reflected on the changes which had made me unworthy of it. She was still the same pure, affectionate being of my happier days, and I had become an outcast of Heaven—a guilty and abandoned wretch ! Her praises created the bitterest self-reproaches, and her love for me filled me with scorn of myself. Then memory fell back upon those days when, in innocence and joy, I became a proud and happy instructor, to the lovely and docile child. That remembrance was in my heart as a stream in the desert. But it is even so. In the souls of the most guilty there is generally some solitary good lying unregarded, and almost unfelt, till, in a moment, it is seen, reflected on, and, for a time, wins the sinner back to a consciousness of virtue. And I, too, became virtuous for a time ; thought of happiness, of worth, of wisdom well applied, of honourable love, and of the holiness of truth. But was a blooming flower to stop an avalanche ? The spirit of evil within me had received an

impulse ; had gone rolling onward, increasing in bulk ; and now it must rush on, crushing and effacing all before it. The doctrines of the Fatalist exerted their baneful influence over me. I felt how useless it was to attempt to check a power over which I had lost all control, and gave myself up to my destiny.

I descended to the breakfast-room. There sat Mephistophiles, in his morning gown and slippers, apparently reading the paper.

"How easily is the world deceived !" said he. "A few sweet flatteries, and it listens ; a few brilliant promises, and 'tis caught."

"What now ?" I asked.

"I behold on this broad sheet," he replied, "a glorious combination of fraud, falsehood, and folly. Look at this array of advertisements. One offers to lend fifty thousand pounds on good security, who scarcely possesses fifty pence ; another desires to sell a horse, warranted without blemish, and only to be disposed of because the owner has no further use for it. The last part of the sentence alone bears any relation to truth, as the animal can be of no use to the owner, or to any one else. A third is eloquent upon the virtues of a vegetable pill, which cures all diseases—to which it should have been added, by destroying both the disease and the patient. A fourth, acknowledging the most disinterested intentions, delicately confesses his want of a wife possessed of a moderate property, while stating himself to be a gentleman of a middle age with a small income ; but, in truth, his income is so small that it might have been named without the use of figures, and the middle of his age is as near the end of life as it need be. Here, a worthy citizen offers some pipes of foreign wines of the most approved vintage ; and he is the most likely person to know their genuineness, having manufactured them in his own warehouse. There, an honest tradesman announces that he is selling off his goods, much under prime cost, for the benefit of his creditors, which benefit will prove to be a great loss, he having most successfully swindled every person who would give him credit. Wherever the eye glances, it finds evidence that one set of people prey upon another, as one species of insect is devoured by a more powerful race."

"And what does all this prove?" I inquired.

"It proves that deception is a necessary ingredient in this moral world of yours," he replied; "or that, to use a couplet by a defunct scribbler,

'Surely the pleasure is as great
Of being cheated as to cheat.'

As an instance I name yourself. You have received a letter this morning full of sweet compliments and sugared phrases from a woman—a sort of animal whose true colour is as difficult to discover as aameleon's; and yet you, a philosopher, a student of nature, a yearner after spiritual existence, believe all the pretty words there written as if they had sprung from the very shrine of truth."

"And so they have sprung from the shrine of truth," said I, exultingly; "from a source of unsullied purity—from the very sanctuary of innocence."

"Poor fool!" said Mephistophiles, with a withering sneer.

"Nor," I continued, more earnestly, "can you, with all your refined subtilty, make me believe otherwise. It would sever the last link of the chain that binds me to my species. It would destroy my struggling belief in the excellence of humanity. It would unman me. No! I feel assured that there is something in her sweet nature over which you can have no power. You cannot appreciate her. I know her excellence; and, unworthy as I am, honour it."

"She has ventured into the world of fashion, and is surrounded by a thousand temptations," said Mephistophiles.

"She will withstand them all!" I exclaimed.

A scornful smile played around the lips of my companion. He eyed me with a hot searching glance, that seemed to read my most secret thoughts.

"We will talk of this another time," he replied. "Your friend Fitz-Grey, with his hybrid language, half French and half English, is on the stairs, and therefore we must be prepared for the infliction of an extraordinary dose of exclusive puppyism."

He had scarcely concluded his sentence when the door was thrown open, and the captain made his appearance. He had merely come to rally me on my sudden discovery of my cousin on the preceding evening; gossiped for a con-

siderable time on every unimportant matter he could think of; criticised my dress; gave me much exquisite advice; and then reminded me that my friend the prince and myself had promised to dine with Sir Dumpling Porringer.

"You must go, my dear fellow," he exclaimed; "can't possibly be excused. His dinners are the most *rècherchés* things of the kind, and his *chêf de cuisine* not to be equalled in the world. Monsieur Omelette is an *artiste* superexcellent at a *vol au vent*, a *rissolle*, or a *fricandeau*. As for Sir Dumpling, he is the Epicurean of the *beau monde*; and among his *habitués* may be found all that is brilliant in rank and fashion. Must go, positively. You will find the conversation at his table sparkling as his champagne. No *hauteur*, no *persiflage*, no *imbécille* allowed there—all is *gaieté de cœur esprit*, and *socialité*. In fact, I should be somewhat astonished at the circle of *beaux*, ay! and often *belles esprits*, the baronet gathers around him; but I say with Rabelais, '*Mais aujourd'hui je ne m'ébahis plus de rien.*' Must go. But, *bon jour!* I am off to pay a thousand visits. *Adieu, Monsieur le Prince, au revoir.*"

As he drove off in his cab, Mephistophiles remarked—

"Your friend is one of a numerous class of military men, who imagine the most effeminate manners a sign of good soldiery. In fact, the officers of one regiment are notorious for their ridiculous and offensive puppyism. This is, in some measure, attributable to the folly of your modern Augustus, whose hobby they were. He took as much pride in arraying, altering, and fashioning their accoutrements, as a girl takes in dressing her dolls. And what sort of a dress has he given them? One sufficiently showy and strange to attract attention towards the officers in time of peace, but one most inconvenient and insecure as a covering for the men in the field of battle. Impudence, absurdity, affectation, insolence, pride, selfishness, libertinism, making modest women blush, and refusing satisfaction to men they fancy their inferiors whom they have insulted, are among the most prized accomplishments of this honourable corps."

"But their valour is unquestioned," said I, willing to say something in defence of Fitz-Grey.

"Granted. Even allow them this saving virtue," he replied, "and what are they? Though there is much froth on the top of a syllabub, there is wine in it; yet it is but a

syllabus after all. There's consolation, however, in everything; 'they'll fill a ditch as well as better men.'"

After having ordered the horses to be got ready, we retired to dress.

CHAPTER III.

Club-houses and gin-palaces.—The progress of luxury exemplified.—My *entré* into the world of fashion.—The character I am desirous of supporting therein.—My acquaintance with fashionable literati, and opinions of fashionable literature.—Mephistophiles plays the prince in the boudoir of a marchioness to a select few, and I play the lover in the library with my affectionate cousin.

"You observe these palaces," said Mephistophiles, as we rode along, directing my attention to the various club-houses. "They are the most conspicuous signs of the times. Behold their magnificent columns, their imposing fronts: the interiors are fitted up with the same aim at display. They are fit residences for emperors, yet commoners of limited means may satiate on their enjoyments. They have been created by the desire of the present age for luxury. It is known that the Duke of Leatherhead possesses a princely establishment, a splendid mansion; and indulges in every gratification which an almost unlimited income can supply. He is envied by some hundreds of persons whose desire for luxurious enjoyment is equally as great, but whose means for gratifying their tastes are at an immense distance from his grace's. Collectively they are enabled to do what they could not do individually. Funds are collected; an architect is set to work, and a building—an ingenious absurdity, partly a Grecian temple and partly a Roman villa—rises from the ground. It is furnished in the most costly style—servants in rich liveries are in attendance—the choicest things procured that can give gratification to the palate or to the eye—a French cook, of the greatest reputation, is engaged at a liberal salary; and, in fact, the enviers of the Duke of Leatherhead find, in their club, all the enjoyments

which his grace commands by the assistance of his princely fortune."

"Well," said I, "I see no harm in that."

"None in the least," he replied, with his habitual sneer. "That very refinement which destroyed the energies of Greece and Rome must, of course, strengthen the foundation of the greatness of England. Luxury enervates: it is the food of a sickly appetite; and, in every class of society, from the highest to the lowest, it may be observed making its destructive inroads. The single man who, at a limited expense, enjoys, in a superb palace, all the pleasures of life, knows that by marrying he cannot improve his condition; nay, if he is desirous of making what the world calls a good husband, he must give up his present grandeur: consequently the bachelor, if he is wise, continues to enjoy his single blessedness. The married man flies from the cares and anxieties of matrimonial felicity to his club; and, in the splendour with which he is surrounded, forgets the poverties or miseries of home. His wife is sulking, his children squalling, his servants impertinent; but he is happy, and he finds friendly associates and obsequious domestics. The result is, that the husband spends the greater portion of his time in enjoying these selfish gratifications."

"But some clubs are established for better purposes than mere sensual enjoyment," I observed.

"Some pretend better purposes," said he, "but the end of all is the same. How much sociality must flourish in consequence of the existence of these clubs, is sufficiently manifest. The new member becomes an associate of five hundred others; and, unless he has particular claims upon their attention, may dine with them in the same room for a twelvemonth without their taking the least notice of his presence. If he belong to 'CROCKFORD'S,' and should happen to be particularly rich, the distinguished individuals to whom he is anxious to be introduced will ease him of his money in the most condescending manner over night; and, should they meet him again, cut him with the most high-bred impudence the next day. If he should, by any misfortune, become a genius, and gain an entrance to 'THE ATHENÆUM,' with the hope of its advancing his literary interests, he will find himself surrounded by a crowd of small wits of every rank in life, who are too much engaged in endeavouring to

increase their own importance to pay the least regard to the merits of a rival. Should he have travelled a thousand miles, he will be eligible to 'THE TRAVELLER'S,' where he will find a multitude of tourists who never visited the picturesque beauties of their own country, yet have explored the most inaccessible parts of the globe; and can relate so many marvels, that his simple record of facts is not likely to be listened to, unless he makes use of 'the traveller's privilege' with the liberality employed by his new associates. Should he keep a stud of race-horses, and possess a desire to be ruined with extraordinary speed, he may become a member of 'THE JOCKEY CLUB,' where he will be taught the art of being a *knowing one* in a few lessons, on scientific principles, and in the most gentlemanly manner. If he be a brave officer, left by his grateful country to die of gentility and half-pay, he is eligible for 'THE UNITED SERVICE,' where he may enjoy, every day in the year, a solitary mutton-chop with its delicious accompaniments, while around him general officers, who never saw a battle, are feasting upon all the delicacies of the season. If he be a successful writer of bad plays—a frequent scribbler of twaddling newspaper criticisms—a wretched singer with a large salary—a worse actor, still better paid—or a liberal patron of green-room frailty and dramatic mediocrity, he will, doubtless, find a place in 'THE GARRICK,' where, in an incredibly short time, he may be initiated into all the mysteries of vulgarity, and be surfeited with the originality of Joe Miller. And should he be a briefless barrister—a clientless lawyer—a retired citizen—a pictureless artist—a patientless apothecary—a vulgar stockbroker—a bookmaker without talent—a play-wright without originality—a treasury clerk, with a small sinecure and great conceit, or any individual who has some money to spend and a little respectability to lose, he will be welcomed to 'THE CLARENCE,' where, in a week, he will be bored to death with bad puns, and ruined at six-penny whist."

"A pretty description of London Clubs!" I observed, laughing.

"That is not all," he replied: "this taste for show in the middle and higher classes has a great influence upon tradesmen. Observe these shops in this magnificent street, with their counters extending an almost interminable length.

What display ! what attraction ! Every art is exercised to captivate the eye—look at those unrivalled sheets of plate glass—those dazzling mirrors that multiply this costly splendour—that tempting array of jewellery in that brilliant window—those gorgeous shawls in that pillared apartment (the first shop in the world) : hats, drapery, false hair, drawings, music, snuff-boxes, plate, china, glass, books, confectionery, cutlery, every thing that is of use or ornament, that can charm the senses or gratify the appetite, collected from every part of the globe, are here exposed in apparently an exhaustless profusion, and in so attractive a manner, that this street is the wonder of foreigners, and the favourite resort of the inhabitants of London. Yet this general display is the general ruin. Nine out of ten of these shopkeepers speedily become bankrupts.”

We rode on for some short time in silence ; at last, when we had proceeded a little distance, we came before a house, the front of which displayed, in all their architectural magnificence, pillars of the Corinthian order : a large clock, which could be illuminated at night, showed the hour in a manner peculiarly attractive, from an elevated part of the building ; and a lamp of immense proportions, profusely decorated, was suspended over the entrance. A crowd of the lower orders had congregated round the door. “This,” said my companion, “is one of the many instances which abound in this metropolis of the taste for display in the humbler classes. This is a gin-shop. While the rich man is sipping his claret in one of the splendid apartments of his princely club, the poor man is enjoying his gin in a room, the fittings up of which cost several thousand pounds. Refinement has made such rapid progress in every direction, that the beggar who sweeps the crossing thinks it vulgar to be seen in a common tap-room ; and so he goes to the gin-palace and gets drunk in style, at the expense of three half-pence farthing.”

“I cannot see,” I observed, “how the purveyors of this favourite liquid, with this immense expense, can gain any profit.”

“They realize a large fortune in a few years,” he replied. “But I will tell you how they manage to do so. In some obscure part of the town, upon an unoccupied piece of ground, several houses of the smallest kind are built. One

of these the retailer of gin purchases as soon as it is erected, fits it up as a small distillery, and there secretly manufactures an immense quantity of illicit spirit, which is conveyed by his agents into the gin-palace. By defrauding his majesty of the duties, he is enabled to undersell others in the trade. Some gin-sellers are most honest. They purchase the raw spirit from the distiller, paying all the duties, then adulterate it more than one-half with the most poisonous materials. They do not cheat the king's revenue, they only destroy the king's subjects. The profit arises from the extent to which they can adulterate the raw spirit, or procure an illicit distillation, and from the immense quantity drunk by the lower orders. The man who first invented gin deserves immortality, and I will take very good care he shall have it, though not in this world. Gunpowder has not produced half the effect of this intoxicating spirit; steam is not to be compared to its power. The discovery of Friar Bacon may kill a few thousands occasionally, but gin is destroying nine-tenths of the poor population of this vast metropolis. Steam may boast of forty-horse power, but gin has an unlimited drunkard power. It overthrows all before it.

“ Look at the habitual gin-drinker ! He is a distinguished man, a person to be known anywhere. He has a cadaverous countenance, but he is well fed. He is covered with rags, yet he is comfortably clad. He is a most miserable wretch, yet he can always enjoy a draught of happiness for five farthings. Gin is to him food, clothing, and felicity. While he can find a copper in his pocket, and can feel the way to his mouth, he has no wants but those which gin can supply. How does the gin-drinker live ? He rises in the morning from a restless sleep, and as quickly as possible directs his steps to the gin-palace. He finds a crowd of wretches, with the same desire as himself, hastening to steep their senses in a blissful forgetfulness of their mutual misery. They bear about them all the tokens of squalid poverty. Disease seems familiar to one, death appears approaching another. Their cheeks are yellow, their lips colourless, their eyes sunk ; and their looks are expressive of imbecility, cunning, and sensuality. Yet they are exceedingly happy, revelling in delight. The drunken mother is pouring gin into the mouth of her drunken infant, and blasphemes in the most eloquent manner because the baby has swallowed

more of her favourite beverage than she intended. The lachrymose coalheaver, with the bit of rusty crape round his greasy hat, whose amiable wife a week since was discovered dead drunk, is treating his hopeful son, the charity boy, to a brimming glass of his only luxury; and, with difficulty attempting to keep his perpendicular, is deploring the loss of his tender spouse, while recommending the fuddled youth never to get 'tossicated.' The honest apple-woman from the corner, who teaches all the errand-boys in the neighbourhood to rob their masters, is denouncing doctors' stuff, and praising gin. The Irish sprat-crier is flirting with the bricklayer's labourer, and the carrot-headed gentleman is treating his squinting charmer to another glass. Leaning against the counter, in a suit of black, threadbare and ragged, without a shirt to his back, or a sole to his shoe, and with the crown of his hat regularly dented in, out of all semblance to a hat, leans a 'gentleman who has seen better days.' He was, some years back, a respectable tradesman with a large business; but his insatiable thirst brought him to the condition in which he now is. He has been asking the showy bar-maid, who is scolding the old woman on crutches for swearing so vehemently, if she would trust him with a pennyworth of gin till the evening, declaring 'on his soul and body' she should be paid; and because she sulkily refused, he is debating within his own mind whether he shall put an end to his miserable life by hanging or drowning. He cannot exist without gin.

"With these, and fifty such as these, the habitual gin-drinker takes his morning draught; forty times in the course of the day he repeats his visit to the gin-palace, and on each occasion finds it filled with a similar party. When the temple of his devotion is closed, he reels about the streets in search of some lodging for the night; perhaps he finds it in the station-house, possibly in a cellar, likely enough he snores on a doorstep, and least probably in a bed. An habitual gin-drinker is above the wants of his more sober brethren. He requires nothing—but gin. The next morning he wakes to pursue exactly the same path trod by him on the preceding day. And thus he continues for a short time, till his place is filled by another. The life of an habitual gin-drinker has no variety: it possesses a delightful sameness; it is 'gin' from the beginning of the chapter to the conclusion."

"The lower orders must drink an immense quantity," said I, not a little shocked at the picture which Mephistophiles had drawn of the depravity of the poor.

"The frequent use of a stimulant lessens its influence," he replied; "and you must increase the dose as you become accustomed to its effects, if you desire it to retain the same power over you it exercised at first. Thus acts the opium eater; and, on the same principle, drinks the gin-drinker. At first one glass would satisfy for the day, now fifty are scarcely thought sufficient for the same time."

"Can nothing stop this frightful increase of intoxication?" I asked.

"Why should it be stopped?" inquired my companion, with one of his peculiar smiles. "Does not his majesty's exchequer profit by the increase of gin-drinking? and should the government attempt, by laying a tax upon the spirit, to stop the progress of intemperance, what an outcry it would occasion among 'the friends of the people!' What a shame it would be to force the poor to be sober! Why should not Mother Flounder treat herself to a drop or two as well as Lady ——? and what horrible injustice it would be to allow a lord to get 'inebriated,' and not confer the same privilege upon a labourer!"

"Enough of this subject," said I. "We are now at Lady Brambleberry's door, and I promised to pay my cousin a visit."

The horses were given to the groom, and we shortly found ourselves in the marchioness's *boudoir*. It was an elegant chamber, fitted up with that peculiar air of refinement which is only to be found in the mansions of those who possess taste as well as wealth. Everything that was rare, beautiful, and expensive, seemed collected in that delightful apartment. The curtains of the windows were of rose-coloured silk; and the cushions of the ottomans, chairs, and *fauteuils*, were covered with figured damask of the same colour. The shelves of a capacious mahogany bookcase, richly carved, were filled with books in the most costly bindings. On the opposite side stood a most elegant cabinet-piano of rosewood, enriched with bronze *doré*; and near it a harp, glittering with gilding, and painted in arabesque. The walls were covered with the choicest modern engravings, in splendid frames, interspersed with a few exquisite

drawings in water colours. In one part of the room was a magnificent commode, ornamented with *or molu* and *seures*; in another, a superb cabinet of ebony and mosaic, of the time of Louis the Fourteenth. Here a foreign clock displayed the story of Mazeppa in *or molu*; there an incense-burner represented the destruction of Herculaneum in Worcestershire china. The beautifully sculptured marble chimney-piece was covered with Spanish brigands in *terra cotta*, Greek pirates in alabaster, baskets of chased silver, cups of decorated gold, carvings in ivory, ornaments of mother-of-pearl; and wherever there was space, it was crowded in the same manner with a multitude of similar objects of *bijouterie*, which, reflected by numerous mirrors, seemed to be in endless profusion. The room was brilliant with splendour, and breathed the most delicious fragrance. It was the temple of fashion, and the high priestess of the shrine was surrounded by a crowd of eager worshippers.

I was immediately recognised and welcomed. I introduced my companion as the Prince Von Völligdunkel-Gross-Siegelbewahrer; and, to do him justice, his highness was not slow in making himself agreeable. He sat down on the ottoman by the side of the marchioness, after having displaced a favourite spaniel comfortably resting there, and chatted to her ladyship, and one or two of her particular friends, in a style that created for him the most favourable impression. I had also determined to produce an effect. I knew that appearance would create wonders in my favour if I acted with skill, consequently I had dressed with the greatest possible taste. My hair, Fitz-Grey had acknowledged, was irreproachable; and my teeth, Cartwright had told me, were immaculate: the person, I flattered myself, was sufficiently attractive. My friend, the exquisite, had taken considerable pains to make me more attentive in my toilet arrangements than I had previously been; and I thought it advisable to endeavour to profit by his instructions. The character was next to be considered.

When a young man of family enters the world—such was the opinion of the guardsman—if he is ambitious of being distinguished, he should endeavour to be original in his style. He should come out from the mass clear and conspicuous. All young men of fashion seem infected with the spirit of dandyism; that is, they show, by their adoption

of a certain style of dress, the importance with which they treat the subject. There is every variety of the genus dandy; the effeminate dandy, who faints at the sight of port, and goes into convulsions at the smell of cheese; the boisterous dandy, who drives four-in-hand, horsewhips his groom, and uses his lungs and muscles to the annoyance of the timid; the silly dandy, who lisps out his words, as if their utterance gave him inexpressible pain, and does not seem to possess so much as the shadow of an idea; the sentimental dandy, who writes sugar-plum verses in the "Keepsake," and fancies himself in love with every pretty woman who asks him to write in her album; the pedantic dandy, who makes use of quotations which others have sought for him, and wishes to be considered a miracle of learning among those who are better informed than himself; the vulgar dandy, who cultivates his whiskers to a preposterous size, drinks porter in the original pewter, and patronises pugilists; the facetious dandy, who every night manufactures jokes for the next day's expenditure, studies the most effective way of saying a good thing, and is perfectly convinced that he is a wit; and there are many others of less importance, but all lay claim to some peculiar feature by which they may be known. I resolved to be none of these. I would always dress in good taste, as a gentleman should; but dress, I determined, should become with me a secondary consideration. I would, as much as possible, be independent of fashion. I would deny its supremacy, and throw off its influence.

Impressed with this idea, I joined in the conversation. Miss Rhimewell, a young lady who was afflicted with an unfortunate propensity for writing verses, had become amazingly eloquent upon the different annuals that crowded the tables in all the attractions of gay binding and pretty engraving. A circle of young listeners, who also wished to become poets, though they had as yet only scribbled in each other's albums, attended to the speech of the fashionable Corinna, as if her words had been those of an oracle; and she, observing the respect with which her companions treated her opinions, grew more confident and assuming.

"I feel convinced, my dear Lady Ringdove, that these works have produced a satisfactory influence upon literature!" said the fair versifier, directing her discourse to a

young lady the gods had made a poetess and her husband a countess, who appeared to be looking over a portfolio of choice engravings, while she was diligently employed in listening to what was going on, and furtively scrutinizing the appearance of myself and Mephistophiles. "They have brought into general admiration genius of the highest order, that but for their assistance would have perished unnoticed, like blossoms in the wilderness." Imagining she had said something astonishingly clever, she looked to me as if demanding approbation. I had taken up the most aristocratic of all the annuals, and pretended to be reading a choice specimen of doggerel there printed. Lady Ringdove said nothing, but looked assent.

"I perfectly agree with you," said the Honourable Mr. Silverfork, a gentleman who considered himself entitled to give an opinion on all literary subjects, because he had written one of those absurdities in three volumes, called a fashionable novel. "People of rank have now an opportunity of establishing a literature of their own. They have, in some measure, done so. Novels and poems have been produced by individuals belonging to the higher classes, which possess very superior merits; and I do not think it improbable that in a short time we shall show the world authors as exalted for their genius as for their rank."

"Ah! that's very true, Mr. Silverfork," remarked Lady Flatterill, a widow of a certain age, who had a very strange way of praising people; "we should always speak well of the means of our own advancement. Fashion has called these pretty books into existence, and they have returned the compliment by bringing into notice whatever ability fashion may possess. Who are the gainers it is difficult to say."

"I must confess I like their appearance," remarked Sir Lionel Satyr, the ugliest baronet that had ever been created.

"If we were to judge by appearances, my dear Sir Lionel," replied the fair widow, "how very uncharitable we might frequently become."

"These annuals," said I, entering into the conversation rather abruptly, "have done much mischief both to art and to literature." The ladies wondered; the gentlemen stared. I continued:—"Their great attraction has always been their embellishments; but, beautiful as they appear

they possess a superficial excellence that ought never to satisfy the artist or the connoisseur. On their production the painter and the engraver fritter away time which might be more valuably employed in creating some work worthy of the admiration of a future age. These are little things that can only procure for their originators a little reputation. The literary department is still less to be admired." Miss Rhimewell looked surprised; Mr. Silverfork amazed. I proceeded:—"It is composed of pretty poems of pretty nonsense, with pretty tales possessing a similar pretty recommendation. In fact, they are the mere ephemera of modern literature: things of the sunshine, that glitter a little, show their gaudy beauties to the world, and then are heard of no more. Their days are numbered. The work I now hold in my hand scarcely pays its expenses; and is indebted for the circulation it obtains more to the titles of its contributors than to the excellence of their compositions. Fashion has done herself no credit by her patronage of these publications; and the literary assistance they have received from her hands is not likely to save them from a speedy oblivion." I flung the book on the table; most of the ladies appeared astonished at my want of taste; Sir Lionel seemed to admire my impudence, and Mr. Silverfork to pity my ignorance.

At my first entrance I had looked in vain around the room for Dora; and observing that Mephistophiles had concluded an extraordinary adventure at the court of Berlin he was relating to a select circle of delighted auditors, I inquired of Lady Brambleberry what had become of my cousin.

"Most probably you will find her in the library," replied the marchioness, languidly: "she is remarkably fond of reading, and finds but little gratification in society. I let her follow her own inclination; but I think it would be better if she would show herself more frequently: try if you can persuade her."

I was not long in finding my way to the library. It was a spacious apartment, well supplied with the best productions of every age; nor was there wanting in the furniture and decorations evidence of a love of elegance. Busts of the immortal spirits of a better time; choice pictures by the great masters of the great schools; statues and groups of

godlike forms, chiselled by the divine hand of some ancient Greek ; and specimens of antique armour, that had given triumph in the crusade, or security in the tournament, were placed in the most prominent situations, mingled with Grecian vases, Indian curiosities, Chinese toys, Egyptian idols, Spanish figures, antique carvings, and such a variety of other objects of use or ornament, that it appeared as if every country and every age had contributed something towards furnishing the room. On a large circular table in the centre of the apartment were several books, chiefly on military subjects, and materials for writing.

As I entered, I fancied that I observed some man making a hasty exit at an opposite door. This circumstance did not attract my attention at the time ; for Dora, who was sitting near the window reading, noticed my entrance, and throwing her book away, with her face glowing with pleasure, she ran towards me, placed both her hands in mine, and led me to a seat close to her own. Nothing could be more strongly demonstrative of her delight at seeing me. We were alone. I was strongly tempted to learn how far I might calculate on her affection ; for that her feelings were warmer than those of friendship or gratitude, I felt assured. Her eyes were raised to my face with such gladness beaming in her gaze, as told me that the sweetest source of her joy was to be found in scrutinizing my countenance. It was as if an enthusiast had unexpectedly met with a volume, the favourite study of his earlier years, and was poring enamoured over its well-known pages, to see if it still possessed the charms which had retained so strong a hold upon his love. Thus she perused my features ; and, if I might judge from the increasing rapture visible in the clear light of her rich blue eyes, the subject upon which her thoughts were so intently engaged had gained in her heart a deeper and a more enduring interest.

There was something so radiant in the expression of her loveliness, and a spirit so pure seemed breathing out of the admiration my presence evidently excited, that, while I felt charmed by her beauty, the influence of the spell produced none of that animal passion which a loving and lovely woman at all other times would create. All the dark evil of my nature appeared to leave me, while I gazed exultingly on the ripening graces of her person and the immaculate beauty

of her countenance : my spirit seemed to shake off those clouds of doubt and despair which too frequently gathered to a storm that crushed my better feelings ; and I felt like one who has no sin upon his heart, and lifts his eyes unabashed before the throne of his Maker. This effect was produced by the supremacy of goodness : I worshiped it from a natural impulse.

“Dora !” said I, speaking with an earnestness I really felt, “do you remember the time when I had the happiness of being your instructor, and, as an inducement to study, I used to promise to make you my little wife ?” At my allusion to the past, she clasped her hands and lifted up her eyes in ecstasy ; then her delicate cheek was covered with a deeper crimson, and her eyelids fell, till her gaze seemed fixed upon the floor. I continued :—“Then you would apply to your lesson with extraordinary diligence, and tell me that you loved no one in the world as you did your cousin, and never would love another.” She lifted up her eyes for a moment : they were bathed with a slight suffusion, that seemed to throw around them a more divine intelligence. The look could not be misunderstood. I proceeded :—

“What you said as a child may not be your sentiment as a woman. It was your gratitude for some slight services I fortunately rendered, the value of which you loved to magnify, that made you look upon me so affectionately. Years have gone by since then ; and, although you may still retain a grateful remembrance of my care of your childhood, that feeling cannot influence your sympathies so much in my favour as to make them continue to regard me with the fondness of years gone by. With the alteration from childhood to womanhood the feelings change.” She shook her head. “I have been away. I have not seen you for several years. In that time you may have met with some one more deserving your regard.” She again raised her eyes, but it was with a sweet smile around her lips, that expressed the impossibility of such a circumstance. I took her hand in mine, and continued :—“I have not forgotten the many virtues I observed in my guileless pupil. Her desolate situation, and, still more strongly, the many amiable qualities that were daily developing themselves in her gentle nature, drew me towards her with feelings of the purest, the deepest interest.” Here she rewarded me with a look of the

sincerest gratitude. "I daily became more attached to her, and made use of every opportunity to endeavour to make her wiser and happier." I felt a slight, the very slightest, pressure from the small white hand I held in my own. It was scarcely perceptible, but it expressed more than any language could have conveyed. I proceeded:—"I taught her whatever my limited ability would enable me to teach; but I taught her nothing but what was good, true, and holy—knowledge that would give a more durable excellence to her own natural goodness, and learning that would at all times confer a more lasting value to her own unsullied worth." Here I felt a more distinct pressure.

"Observing the many endearing qualities which she possessed," said I, "before I left England, I had long regarded them with a love as sincere as that she had acknowledged for me. She was my pride, my joy. I looked upon her virtues as the produce of my own cultivation. I gazed upon her beauties with the exultation of the sculptor for his proudest achievement—the work of years of toil, of hope, and of anxiety. I loved her as my own." During these sentences her look had been cast down; but I could tell, by the rapidity with which the colour on her transparent cheek went and came, the gratification they gave her. I went on:—"Yet, during my absence in Gottingen, it is possible that I may have met with some fair being whose charms won my affections." Her look became anxious. "There are women in Germany, the influence of whose beauty it is almost impossible to resist; and, thrown into their society, it was not a difficult task to sacrifice a juvenile attachment on a nearer and more attractive altar." She grew pale. "I was young, ardent, and full of impulse," said I. "I saw more than one whose charms I could not help admiring. I met with hearts that loved me, and which would be loved in return." Her complexion became much paler. I proceeded:—"It is probable that, being surrounded by inducements to evil, I plunged into every kind of vice—became wicked, selfish, depraved, sensual—forgot all that conscience should have taught me to remember, and learned all that virtue should have led me to avoid." In an instant the expression of her features changed. The eloquent blood rushed to her cheek; her eyes became brilliant with pleasure, and the smile which played around her rosy little

mouth expressed the most perfect, the most steadfast incredulity. The thought that I had once been otherwise than she had known me, she could not entertain for a moment : it was impossible ; and she imagined that I invented the accusation merely to observe how it would be received. Dear, innocent, confiding girl ! I loved her the more for her belief in my integrity ; and her assurance in my worth only made me with greater clearness perceive the vast accumulation of my own unworthiness. Alas ! if I had not suffered myself to become the dupe of hellish delusions, the admiration of her virtues would soon have taught me that the best way of showing my appreciation of their excellence was by purifying myself from the dominion of my own evil passions.

“ Dear Dora ! ” said I, “ am I then to understand that the interest you felt for me when a child is matured to a warmer, fonder, more enduring attachment ? ” When she heard the endearing appellation I prefixed to her name, she could not disguise the sense of pleasure it conveyed ; but when the full meaning of the sentence came before her, her eyes were again cast down—a blush of maidenly modesty overspread her features—she appeared uneasy, and, I thought, was anxious to avoid a reply. I repeated the question in a more earnest, a more affectionate manner. Her anxiety increased—she became more confused—her bosom heaved and fell more rapidly than was usual for a heart so free from violent passion as her own : at last she lifted up her head, and her look revealed to me the fulness, the depth, and the energy of her love. The glance was but momentary, but there was something so thrilling in its brilliancy, and so convincing in its meaning, that I could not feel a doubt as to its purport. I caught up in ecstasy the gentle hand I held in mine, and pressed it rapturously to my lips. She did not attempt to withdraw it.

“ But supposing, my sweet cousin,” said I, “ that, during my stay in Germany, I had loved another ”—she looked concerned—“ could you still feel for me that fondness with which I am now regarded ? ” At first a shadow seemed stealing over her radiant countenance, but it quickly disappeared ; and I read, in characters that could not be misunderstood, that her attachment had taken too strong a hold upon her nature to be affected by my inconstancy. Again

I kissed the dear hand, but more passionately than before. It was not noticed, except by a warmer rosiness in her cheek, and a softer splendour in her eyes. "And supposing, my love," I continued, "that, having got beyond the influence of your purifying excellence, my soul became polluted with the foulest crimes: unworthy as I might be of your love, could that innocent breast still retain for me a place in its affections?" The reply was immediate: her look expressed the existence of a feeling which could not change under any circumstances, at the same time that it conveyed a doubt of my becoming so lost to all sense of good as I would make myself appear. I caught her in my arms in a transport of gratification purer than any feeling I had for years enjoyed. I kissed her with a rapture far beyond any pleasure I had ever known. I promised to love her, to become worthy of her affection, to worship her purity, and to live for her happiness. I poured out all the rich eloquence of passion. I lavished upon her all the fond endearments of love. I vowed to become to her every thing I had once been, and was most earnest in my praise of her constancy and truth.

I could not learn from the expression of her features the feelings with which Dora regarded the evidence I had given of my affection. Her face was resting upon my breast; and I could observe nothing but the light silken hair that fell in rich tresses upon her cheek. She seemed to have given herself up entirely to my will; but, knowing no evil, she feared none. She did not attempt to withdraw herself from my embrace; she made no resistance to my caresses; she never took her hand from within mine; and I should scarcely have known the sentiments she enjoyed, had I not, during the silent exercise of my homage, felt a tear-drop fall upon my hand. Its source was a heart overflowing with joy. One incident in that interview I remember well. In the intensity of feelings, to the beneficial influence of which I had long been a stranger, I was lifting up my eyes from a long fond gaze upon the drooping form of the dear girl whose existence seemed so closely bound with my own, when I saw, or fancied I saw, Mephistophiles in the room, scowling upon me with a countenance that expressed the most demoniacal malice and hatred. I started as if stung by a serpent. Dora was aroused from her blissful revery, and gazed in

alarm at my troubled looks. But the vision vanished the instant it was perceived, and in a few minutes I regarded it as a delusion.

I look back upon the moments I passed in the indulgence of the sweet felicity of this interview with that devoted and amiable girl as a time sacred amid the unholiness of my sinful existence. Alas! for my abandoned nature—the moment I left her presence, the influence her excellence had possessed over me was destroyed.

CHAPTER IV.

The epicure, his banquet, and his guests.—Mephistophiles makes many observations on the advantages of cookery, in which the reader will find something that is new, if not much that is amusing.

THE dinner given by Sir Dumpling Porringer was, as Fitz-Grey had stated, quite *recherché*. The table glittered with plate and cut-glass. Here was a magnificent tureen of richly chased silver; there a superb *épergne* of the same metal: in one place a costly candelabra; in another a splendid *plateau*. Wherever the eye glanced might be observed something that evinced the ingenuity of Ellis, and displayed the taste of the owner. The plates, and some of the dishes, were of the most beautiful china, richly painted, and the subjects delineated upon them were representations of the luxurious living of the ancients. In one was designed a banquet given by the orator Hortensius, in his marine villa at Bauli; in another, a feast originated and presided over by the eloquent and sumptuous Crassus, in his famous hall with pillars of Hymettian marble, that distinguished his palace in Rome; then came the extravagant entertainments of the emperors Heliogabulus, Claudius, Vitellius, and Galienus, followed by those scarcely less expensive of Lucullus and Philippus, and of the more immortal Apicius. Nor were the luxurious Greeks forgotten: we beheld a festival given by Demetrius Poliorcetes, in honour of his favourite mistress; and as proud a feast given by Alcibiades

in compliment to the frail beauties of Athens. We saw the classic banquets of the Epicureans, and the social festivals of the Cyrenaics. Then came the Egyptians feasting at Alexandria in the presence of their voluptuous queen, Cleopatra, and her imperial lover, Mark Antony; a grand Hebrew carousal, honoured with the presence of the magnificent Solomon; an Assyrian entertainment, given by order of the effeminate Sardanapalus; the festal parties of Alexander in the Persian capital, and the gluttonous extravagancies of Pope Julius III. in his Episcopal palace. Besides these, were represented the warlike revelries of the rude Danes; the prodigal hospitality of the chivalrous Saracens; the refined taste of the indolent Pompeiians; the simple repasts of the pastoral Arcadians; the licentious excesses of the worshippers of the Aphrodite, in the Island of Paphos; and the secret debaucheries of the profligate Romans at their Bacchanalian orgies. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the drawing, the richness of the colouring, the genius of the artist in the expression of character, and his fidelity in the delineation of costume. All was natural, elegant, and exquisitely finished.

Nor were the viands less worthy of praise. Every thing which could afford gratification to the most pampered appetite appeared on the table: dishes in which all the genius of cookery was displayed; compositions formed of the rarest materials, prepared with the most elaborate art, and combined with the most consummate skill. They were chiefly of French origin; but some were created partly by the invention of the host, and, in some measure, by the perfecting talent of his Parisian cook. The more bulky preparations remained on the table while they were required, and the smaller made-dishes were handed round on silver waiters to the company; when each individual helped himself to whatever he fancied. Behind the chair of every guest was stationed a tall footman in a handsome livery, who paid immediate and exclusive attention to the wants and wishes of the individual before him; and near the host stood the butler, out of livery,—a respectable-looking old gentleman, with hair neatly powdered; suit of black, genteelly cut; white cravat, carefully tied; black silk stockings, knee-breeches, shoes resplendent with Day and Martin, and all other appurtenances that distinguish the upper servant in

a family of rank. His duty was to superintend the arrangement of every thing, and to receive the orders of the master of the banquet. But the domestics only remained in the room during the early part of the dinner.

At the head of the table sat Sir Dumpling Porringer, a baronet of extensive fortune and small intellect. From a child he had been remarkable for his taste in culinary preparations. When a boy, he loved to be in the kitchen watching the proceedings of the cook and his assistants for some time previous to the dinner hour, and early showed an inquisitive disposition in all matters relating to the knowledge of good eating. There were no books from which he gathered so much pleasure as from an old edition of *Mrs. Glass*, lent him by the housekeeper, and an early copy of "*The Cook's Oracle*," bought for him by the butler. As he grew older, his inclination became more conspicuous. At Harrow, he was noticed for the eloquence with which he denounced the barbarisms of the cookery; at Oxford, he was distinguished for the expensive banquets he gave at "*The Star*;" at home, he bribed the cook to teach him the mysteries of his art, began to discover a taste for made-dishes, and had a finger in every pie. His preference of the servants' apartments annoyed his mother, a lady of remarkable elegance of manners, refined intellect, and illustrious birth, who knew by experience how little knowledge worth acquiring her son was likely to obtain from his humble associates. She therefore sent him, first, to college, and then on the grand tour. The young baronet staid some time in Paris, where he took lessons in the science of gastronomy from the first artist in that metropolis; he afterward proceeded to Italy and Germany, inquiring into the state of his favourite art, and studying the materials of the most approved dishes. Since he returned to England, and became master of his splendid fortune, at an extravagant salary he engaged the most celebrated cook in Europe; and his ambition has been to keep the best table and the best opera-dancer in London. He always dines at home, at a certain hour, with a certain number of guests, a certain number of dishes, and a certain number of wines; never asks the same guest twice in the same season; never has the same dish twice in the same

month; and although wine of the same name may be brought up to table, it is every day of a different vintage.

At the time of which I write, Sir Dumpling Porringer was, in a slight degree, inclined to corpulency: his face was round, fresh-coloured—I might say it was tinged with every colour in the rainbow,—the yellow, red, and brown predominating: his gray eyes beamed with a soft and sensual gaze; and his large mouth was strongly indicative of that state of animal enjoyment in which he might be said to exist. His hair was well curled,—I ought to have said his wig, for he possessed no natural hair,—and his dress was made in the best style.

Every thing about him gave evidence of his ruling passion. His library contained every edition of every book, in every language, that related to his favourite pursuit: most conspicuous among which might be found the “*Deipnosophistæ*” of Athenæus, the “*Gastronomia*” of Archestratus, and the treatise “*De re Culinaria*” of Cælius Apicius. His pictures were numerous and valuable, and all represented persons engaged in the important occupations of eating and drinking; portraits of dead game, groups of fish, flesh, and fowl, and various other subjects of active and still life. His way of life was singular, if only for its uniformity. In the morning, that is to say, between the hours of eleven and twelve, he made his appearance, in a flowing silk dressing-gown and velvet slippers, at the breakfast-table, whereon every delicacy which could tempt the appetite might be found. Having lingered over these, in the society of a companion and the morning papers, for a sufficient time, he committed himself to the care of his valet for the next two hours; when, having undergone the necessary adornment, he gave orders to the cook for the day’s entertainment; and drove out in his cabriolet with his toady and his tiger, to make calls, purchases, visit picture-galleries, book sales, see every thing which had the most remote connection with that one object of his thoughts, and buy every thing of the same character which money could procure. Sometimes the early part of the day was passed in inventing dishes, sauces, or preserves; or in making experiments with flavours, with the hope of originating something new; or in devising improvements in the dressing of vegetables, meats, and fish. But, in general, the

time hung heavily upon his hands till the important hour of dinner arrived. Then he was all enjoyment. His spirit seemed to come like a star out of a cloud, and he shone the rest of the evening the brightest in the brilliant galaxy of gourmands he usually contrived to gather around him ; yet he scarcely ever spoke during dinner, or immediately after, as talking interfered with his digestion. On particular occasions he went to the opera, the theatres, Almack's, *soirées*, Crockford's, and the other post-prandiarly amusements of the fashionable world ; but his particular delight was to sit after dinner in his soft indolent morocco chair, enjoying his wine, of which he drank moderately ; conversation, in which he mingled sparingly, unless upon his favourite topic ; and, when his guests had departed, to ruminate upon the various exquisite flavours and the delicious morsels with which he had indulged his palate. Such was his town life, and from this his country life varied but slightly : it only possessed a less selection of guests, a greater variety of occupations, and a more limited circle of enjoyments. Thus he had lived till he had progressed beyond his fortieth year, and thus it appeared he meant to exist until his thread of life was spun.

Such was Sir Dumpling Porringer—the refined, the elegant, the luxurious epicure. At the opposite end of the table sat his particular friend, his intimate associate, and his constant companion, Lord Sponge. I was wrong when I said the baronet never asked the same guest twice in one season to dinner ; no table was ever thought by him perfect in its arrangements without the presence of Lord Sponge : but his lordship was his shadow—a part of himself ; in other words, he was what is called a toad-eater. This nobleman, having rapidly spent the fortune he originally possessed, found now no other means of obtaining a decent existence than by fastening himself upon a richer man, and out of another's superabundance drawing the means of supporting a station in society more in accordance with his own rank. Sponge was a poor lord, one of a numerous class who live by their wits, never pay their debts, prey upon tradesmen, and swindle every person who will trust them. He was a pleasant fellow, an agreeable companion, a courtly eulogist, and in many ways a very useful sort of personage ; at least so he appeared to Sir

Dumpling; for the latter, having once invited him to dinner, found the conversation of his new friend so entertaining, and his manner so social, that the invitation was repeated. As the noble lord was not disposed to conceal his qualifications, and never failed in eloquence when the subjects of his praises were the refined taste and original genius of his hospitable host, in a short time they became inseparables. His lordship took up his residence in the house, breakfasted in the house, dined in the house, and, in the eyes of the owner, had become a part of the house. He had always a seat in the cabriolet, was a companion in the baronet's visits, an associate in his experiments, acted as a guide to direct the guests where to admire the skill of his patron, and never failed to afford amusement to Sir Dumppling and his visitors by the brilliancy of his conversation and the humour of his jests. He said smart things, perpetrated puns, laughed at the proper time, and made others laugh with the same appropriateness. His principles were not easily discovered, because he had none; his tact was more conspicuous, and that deserved commendation. In his person he was tolerably prepossessing; in his manner still more so. His features were remarkable for nothing but a pair of small sharp eyes, that were ever vigilantly occupied in making observations upon the persons and things around him. As for his dress, he could afford to wear the most expensive clothes, because he never paid for them. He was still young,—little more than thirty,—yet old in the world. An accomplished flatterer, an able dissimulator, most assiduous in cultivating his own interests, and exceedingly skilful in taking advantage of circumstances. He delighted in styling himself "A man of the world,"—a title he introduced upon every occasion.

Besides Captain Fitz-Grey, Mephistophiles, and myself, there were two other guests assembled on this occasion: one was the Honourable Augustus St. John, recently returned a member for the borough of Pollem; and a dissipated loungeur transformed into a sedate representative of the people by a contested election; a young gentleman of good family and small means, who ceased to care for his creditors, and always talked of his constituents; an embryo orator, who made speeches everywhere but in parliament. The other was Admiral Sir Antler Taffrail, a Knight of the Bath,

and an Admiral of the Blue ; an officer who, which is somewhat remarkable, had never seen a battle, but who, which is still more fortunate, possessed a very pretty wife, whose attractions once exerted a powerful influence at court.

Some kings, as Mephistophiles observed, if they do not care about the attachment of their male subjects, are often anxious to gain the affections of various individuals of the fairer sex, especially when the latter possesses such recommendations to the royal favour as youth and beauty. In this instance the monarch, with a profuse liberality, bestowed upon all such deserving objects his princely regard ; and Mrs. Taffrail having been introduced at court during the early part of her husband's naval career, became there an especial favourite. Promotion was rapidly showered upon the husband, and the wife could not be otherwise than grateful. The admiral was kept on a foreign station, actively employed in doing nothing ; and the admiral's lady was retained in the royal palace for an equally innocent but more particular service. However, the monarch went the way of all monarchs ; Lady Taffrail's services were no longer required, and Sir Antler was recalled, and placed upon half pay. The husband and wife, after a long separation, now enjoyed the fruits of their mutual good offices with more than the usual share of matrimonial felicity : she became a liberal patroness of the Magdalen and the Lock Hospital ; and he is equally attentive to good dinners, never thinks of going to bed sober, keeps three mistresses and a chaplain, is a president of the Temperance Society, and a patron of the Society for the Suppression of Vice. In appearance, Sir Antler Taffrail is not much of the hero. His features are well bronzed and ill set : among which may be noticed a mouth more than tolerably wide, and a nose preposterously out of proportion ; and a forehead very narrow, and cheeks very broad ; little hair, coaxed over a head nearly bald ; no whiskers ; and large brown eyes, always twinkling with self-gratification. In person, he was still less graceful. His body was remarkable for its rotundity, and his legs singular for their unvarying thickness. His dress was in bad taste,—a vulgar attempt at dandyism ; and his manners coarse, but affecting refinement. Yet he was exceedingly convivial—never looked displeased ; his laugh was ready for everybody's joke, and his joke in waiting for

every person's laugh. It was true he had never been in battle, but he thought it was scarcely necessary that that fact should be known; and in conversation he made every one believe that no great engagement had been fought within late years at which he had not distinguished himself.

Such were the party assembled round the table of Sir Dumpling Porringer.

"St. John, what soup do you take?" asked the host of the young member for Pollem.

"I recommend every one whose palate is particularly alive to the perfections of flavour," said Lord Sponge before Mr. St. John could reply, "to try this *potage incomparable*, a recent invention of Sir Dumpling's. It is composed of a combination of flavours so happily mingled that nothing familiar is the result. It is an extraordinary effort of persevering genius and refined taste—a production which does the inventor immortal honour. I consider the man who discovers a new dish, such as the admirable composition before me, more deserving an enduring fame than the inventor of a new science, or the explorer of a new country. For the former affords a fresh source of enjoyment, creates novel sensations of a pleasing character, and shows that the world has made another step in the progress of civilization. The peculiar merits of the *potage incomparable* consist in its unique and delightful flavour, the agreeable freshness with which it dwells upon the tongue, and the irresistible charm with which it provokes the appetite. Your highness will allow me?"

Of course the soup was universally tasted, and of course as generally declared unapproachable.

"Fitz-Grey, my dear fellow!" exclaimed Sir Dumpling, "let me send you some *escalopes de saumon*, after a receipt of my own?"

"*De tout mon cœur*," he replied.

"I am afraid, admiral, you are not particularly gratified with your choice; but many a married man has been similarly situated," observed the attentive Sponge.

"Why," replied the worthy Knight of the Bath, "it is cruising in unknown seas here. Your dishes are all so strange that it is not easy to please one's self. One half I don't like because I do know, and the other half I can't like because I don't know them. It's d—d awkward to find

one's self in the midst of craft of which you have learned but little, and that little unfavourable. However, 'tis with eating as with sailing ; there is but one resource when matters put on an appearance not exactly to your taste."

"And what resource may that be ?" asked Mr. Augustus St. John, with more innocence than a member of parliament is supposed to possess.

"*Bolt* with all speed," replied the admiral, with a laugh that seemed to shake his capacious stomach to its foundation.

"Very good that, Sir Antler !" said Lord Sponge, with a more moderate cachinnation ; "and, doubtless, 'tis a resource of which in both instances you have often found the advantage."

Then followed a general laugh at the admiral, in which his own was the most conspicuous. A silver tray, running upon concealed wheels, one of the ingenious inventions of the classical Ellis, was soon afterward placed on the table, in which, in separate vessels of silver with richly ornamented covers, were a variety of choice made dishes kept deliciously hot by means of a reservoir of boiling water beneath them.

"The garlic in this *bechamel* is rather *un peu fort*," remarked Fitz-Grey, looking as if he was not on the best terms with the dish before him.

"You don't say so !" exclaimed the master of the feast, in a sort of horror that anything on his table should not be pronounced perfection. "Let me taste it."

The parasite looked aghast. A fault had never been hinted at before on such occasions ; and as he considered the exquisite something of a connoisseur, he trembled at the consequences of so rash an opinion. The epicure first swallowed a little water to cleanse the palate of any preceding flavour, and then, with a gravity suitable to the most important undertaking, tasted the accused dish.

"It is in a slight degree too predominant he at last observed, with a quiet and emphatic enunciation of every syllable—"at least I think so. Sponge ! taste it."

Sponge did taste it, and the slow and solemn manner in which he set about giving his opinion showed that he viewed the matter in exactly the same light as his patron.

"Why a—to tell the truth—I really think—it is *rather* too prominent," he observed.

The condemned piece of cookery was sent round to each guest, and every individual pronounced a similar verdict.

"Polish!" exclaimed Sir Dumpling to his butler, with a stern severity of expression in his countenance, "send up M. Omelette."

In a few minutes a little Frenchman, with his hair arranged in the most tasteful curls, his dress the most dressy imaginable, with a peculiar-shaped chapeau in one hand, and an elegant gold-headed cane in the other, came bowing and smirking into the room. I should rather have imagined him to be a *maître de ballet* than a *maître de cuisine*. His well-cut coat was thrown back from his chest to disclose the fashion of his white waistcoat, and the roll collar of an under waistcoat of light blue silk, resting upon the whitest and most elaborately worked of shirt fronts ornamented with glittering studs. Over these a small chain was gracefully festooned till the end was lost in the waistcoat pocket, from which part of a gold eye-glass was seen to protrude; his trousers, fitting tight to an unexceptionable pair of small legs, ended in silk stockings of a showy pattern; and the feet were incased in a pair of neat, highly-polished pumps. He had lived for at least half a century, but his appearance was that of a very young man. With a smile of the most fascinating suavity, three steps particularly graceful, and as many bows, which would have done honour to Perrot, the Frenchman advanced.

"Monsieur Omelette," said the epicure with a becoming seriousness, which was shared by the tall footmen, the respectable butler, and the honourable lord, the other guests listening with attention, and I and Mephistophiles looking on with a smile,—"*Monsieur Omelette*," repeated Sir Dumpling, turning towards his bowing domestic with the look of an Old Bailey judge, "you have put too much garlic in this *bechamel*!"

Had all the cooked materials on the table suddenly recovered the form and spirit of existence, the little Frenchman could not have looked more surprised. He evidently supposed that he had been summoned to the dining-room to receive the congratulations of the company upon his admirable arrangement of the dinner. The brief complaint of his

master, so different from what he expected, seemed at first to have taken his breath away. Instead of the bow he was in the act of perpetrating, he brought his right foot, with a graceful curve, from before him to rest in juxtaposition with his left, and drew up his body erect to all the dignity of five feet one. As he prided himself on his English, he commenced his defence in that language.

"Sare Doomplene!" he at last exclaimed, with the emphatic eloquence of an injured man, "Vat is dat I hear! *Mon Dieu!* too much of de garlic! I dat have been de first artist in the varld dis dwenty year backwards! I dat have de much honour once long time to have been *chef de cuisine* to de King of de French! and dat continued not to stay in de eminent sarevice of de Prince Fricandean to exhibit you de mystary what is of de grand art! *Mon Dieu!* too much of de garlic! Sare, I am in de most astonishment dat never vars. Vare well! You have of me put von grand affront to my professions, sare. Vare well! You have make great *exposé* of my person before all your excellent friends—as is vars of de nobilite and gentry. Vare well! Sare, you shall serve, me not any times more. I shall dismiss you of me. You shall find somebody dat shall make you dishes not so better. Adieu, sare. *Mon Dieu!* too much of de garlic!"

He was bowing himself out with a stiffness very different from the easy manner with which he had entered the room, looking indignant, and claspings his cane and chapeau with extraordinary firmness.

"But, Monsieur Omelette," exclaimed the epicure, who did not at all like the idea of being deserted by so eminent an artist, "you have not told us *why* there is so much garlic in the dish?"

"Vy your head on your soldiers, sare?" replied the little Frenchman, advancing close to Sir Dumpling, with a sort of independence in his look intended to express the injustice with which, it was his opinion, he had been treated. "Vy you vare de coat above your back? 'Tis de fashion in Paris—so is de garlic."

"That is *une autre affaire!*" exclaimed Fitz-Grey, as he devoured, with the greatest relish, the offensive *bechamel*.

"'Tis a most excellent flavour!" observed Sir Dumpling, as he once more tasted the abused dish.

"Quite delicious!" remarked his lordship, as he forwarded it to his neighbour, who, in turn, passed it, till it went round the table, every one praising its peculiar merits.

"'Tis a mistake, Omelette, my good fellow," said the great epicure to the little Frenchman, with a condescending smile; "quite. I was not aware that the Parisians were so strong in garlic. This *bechamel* is one of the most charming things ever produced by your unrivalled skill."

"A most delightful dish!" echoed the parasite.

"*Perfection!*" observed the exquisite.

The Frenchman was again all smiles and politeness. He expressed his gratitude by a similar specimen of choice English, and took his departure with as liberal a display of bows. Yet I think he was scarcely satisfied with the result of the interview; for, as he left the room, he was heard to exclaim indignantly, "*Mon Dieu!* too much of de garlic!"

"These truffles are exquisitely dressed," remarked his communicative lordship. "But how could they be otherwise, having originated in the well-known taste and judgment of so perfect a connoisseur as Sir Dumpling? Let me recommend them to you, Mr. Herbert."

"Prince Von Gross-Siegelbewahrer, allow me to have the honour of taking wine with you!" exclaimed Sir Dumpling, with an appearance of much dignified courtesy. The example was quickly followed.

"Try a *pâté de foie gras*, Fitz-Grey! I can assure you they are delicious," said the attentive toad-eater.

"As I have no doubt of your lordship's *assurance*," replied the seldom satirical captain, "I shall feel *plaisir extrême* in following your recommendation."

The conversation during dinner was very limited and unimportant, chiefly confined to remarks upon viands and wines; much information and commendation on their nature and quality from Lord Sponge; a joke or two, not particularly choice, from the admiral; some abortive attempts at a speech by Mr. Augustus St. John; and a few stray sentences, half French, and half English, from Captain Fitz-Grey. Sir Dumpling seemed to leave all the speaking to his right honourable friend; and the latter proved himself not ill-qualified for the task, for his tongue scarcely ever ceased. The epicure appeared to think that talking would

take away his appetite, or interfere with his digestion ; for his verbal communications were confined to a monosyllabic answer to a question, or a brief invitation to take wine. Mephistophiles seemed scarcely to notice Lord Sponge's efforts to become agreeable, and addressed his observations almost exclusively to me ; and I, although I was not absolutely silent, seldom took a prominent share in the conversation. But when the cloth was removed and the servants had retired, the tongue of nearly every person present was set at liberty, and in a short time there were more talkers than listeners. Sir Dumpling sat apparently listening to some naval anecdotes of his own heroism, related by the admiral, on his right ; while the new member for Pollem, on his left, was as diligently trying to gain his attention to some observations on political economy, forming part of an oration to be delivered by himself in the House upon the first opportunity. Captain Fitz-Grey was carving a pineapple, while Lord Sponge was endeavouring to draw him into an argument concerning the superiority of Spanish to French wines. Mephistophiles observed to me—

“ The rage for gormandizing is getting almost as general in this country as in France. Your young men of fashion know more of the ‘ *Almanach des Gourmands*,’ than the History of England ; they consider nothing so desirable as a familiarity with the mysteries of French cookery, and try to excel a Parisian waiter at a popular restaurant in their knowledge of the most recent vocabulary of the *cuisine*. All endeavour to show a refinement of taste in their preparations for the table. They coax their palates ; they pamper their appetites ; they make a god of their stomachs, and pay it every species of homage and sacrifice—nothing is too good for it, everything must administer to its enjoyments. I am glad to see this. It gives unquestionable evidence of the progress of civilization, vulgarly called the march of intellect. While the schoolmaster is abroad, the cook is at home. That eminent toad-eater Boswell said very truly that ‘ man is a cooking animal ;’ and an ancient proverb, probably the production of a similar old woman, declares that ‘ God sends meat and the devil sends cooks.’ Now it is upon record that there are more cookery books sold than Bibles ; consequently the students of that important branch of the fine arts, gastronomy, must be a most numerous, and

I may say respectable, portion of the community ; and it is no less unquestionable that the devil has been, and is, a great benefactor to the human race. This rage for roasting and boiling, stewing and broiling, may, perhaps, be typical of a future state, in which the same processes will be carried on, only with this difference—that the cooks will then become the cooked. But you, and I, and all sensible people, do not fear this result. It is an idle story, invented to hurry the inhabitants of this cold climate into a warmer one."

Here he paused ; and as all appeared talking at the same time, I only heard the following fragments of conversation from the different speakers :—

"Nelson said to me at the battle of the Nile, after I had succeeded, in command of a small party of boarders, in gaining possession of the deck of one of the enemy's first-rates—a regular three-decker, full as he d——d of guns and men—'Captain Taffrail, you are—' "

"A coward, in every sense of the word—a man of a weak heart, and a weaker mind, is he who refuses to make himself acquainted with the important doctrines of this science. He shrinks from the truth. He is afraid of being convinced. Political economy, as an honourable member has observed, is—"

"Nonsense, my dear fellow !—mere gossip—the idle invention of a few fools. Fanny Elsler is a seductive little creature, and, doubtless, has much to answer for ; but I cannot imagine her to have caused young Napoleon's death. How could you believe such a story ?"

"Why, I believe with Rabelais, '*Un homme de bon sens croit toujours ce qu'on lui dit, et qu'il trouve par écrit* ;' therefore I give credence to the tale."

Mephistophiles continued—

"That young simpleton who thinks himself a legislator, and that poor wretch who knows himself to be a coward, imagine that their host is attentive to the rubbish and falsehood they are uttering. Poor dupes, how much are they deceived ! He hears nothing. The epicure has given up his soul and senses to the mysterious enjoyments of a satiated appetite. His mind is feeding upon the memory of those pleasurable sensations he has lately experienced. All his feelings are delicious—all his reflections exquisite. He drinks wine—he eats fruit—he questions—he replies, mechanically. He has no interest in what he does. The

future does not trouble his thoughts. His gratifications are retrospective. Observe his countenance! In some persons the face serves as an index to the mind—in him it is an index to the stomach. His eyes are illuminated with delight; his features beam with an expression of secret satisfaction; his limbs seek an attitude of ease and comfort: in fact, his whole man is eminently happy. He has no cares and no wants. And this is the effect of cookery! What a pity it is that your industrious seekers after the greatest happiness principle should not have turned their eyes towards this sublime art! Sardanapalus was more wise. The Assyrian voluptuary discovered what the Benthamites, the Owenites, the St. Simonians, and other good-natured fools have sought for in vain. The former having built two cities in one day, affixed on the walls a brief account of himself and his architectural facility, ending with the following concentration of all philosophy:—‘Eat, drink, and be merry; all the rest’s not worth a fillip!’ Sir Dumppling Porringer is a great philosopher. He is deeply learned in the metaphysics of the culinary art. He is one of those who are wiser in their generation than the children of light. He carries his heaven in the delicate folds of his own stomach. But he differs from the Utilitarians. They imagine that felicity should be universal; his happiness is only for the individual. Cookery teaches him that self-gratification is everything, and social enjoyment nothing. What can others know of his ecstasies, his transports, his raptures? They can form no conception of emotions hidden from all but himself. What does he care for their feelings, sensations, sympathies? He does not give them a thought, being too completely taken up with the consideration of his own. As Diogenes could find happiness in a tub, the epicure finds it in a dish. Sir Dumppling is the chief of the English Epicureans—he is the father of the new philosophy, for almost since man was first created he has been a cooking animal.”

Mephistophiles here helped himself to wine, and passed the decanters. During his silence I could distinguish the talkers still employed, and heard the following morsels:—

“Your lordship is right: poor people are a nuisance—poverty a bore. I never encourage beggars. I resemble the French bishop, of whom it was said, ‘*Qu’il donnerait*

plutôt un écu à une garce, qu'un denier à une pauvre. But there are mendicants besides those one meets upon the *trottoirs*. Persons who borrow—”

“The d——d rogues! the beggarly rascals! the sneaking thieves!—they are ten to one!” said I; “but you are Englishmen! We gave them broadside after broadside; shot their rigging to threads, and their masts to splinters; and in ten minutes, if you’ll believe me—”

“There is not a word of truth in the matter: the statement is completely false; and the arguments drawn from such data must be erroneous. When the wants of the consumers increase beyond the supply of the producers—”

“Hang the rascals!” say I: “shoot, drown, poison—send them out of the world with the utmost expedition! Debts of honour should always be paid. There is not a nobleman or gentleman in the land so punctual in such payments as myself. I am a man of the world; and if you’ll only oblige me—”

“It is a pity,” continued Mephistophiles, “that a science of such vast utility as cookery is not taught in our public schools. It would be a wise system of instruction that made the culinary art a prominent feature. Suppose the boy, instead of cramping his fingers with the manufacture of pot-hooks and hangers, was allowed to study the more attractive knowledge of roast and boiled; for the incomprehensibilities of the Eton Latin Grammar, let there be substituted the charming erudition of the Complete Cookery Book; and when he ought to be bothering his brains with Homer, let him illuminate his understanding with Ude. What would be the result? A man of taste—one who knows how to *live well*—a very superior species of cooking animal. The student might commence with *potage à la Julienne*, and end with a *salmi de bécasse*. Lectures should be given at the universities upon the composition of *salmis*, *macedoines*, *fricandeaus*, *marinades*, &c.; professorships instituted, and degrees conferred. Why should there not be bachelors, masters, and doctors of cookery, as well as of medicine, divinity, music, or law? The former is substantially useful, the latter ideally so. The one feeds the mind and the body at the same time, the other seldom invigorates either. I hope the time is not very far distant, when scholars seeking university honours will be anxious to become a B.C. or a

D.C. ; and produce in their examinations, as evidence of their qualifications, not a thesis, or a calculation, but a *côte-lette à l'épigramme*, or a *poulet à la Tartare*."

"But what are we to do with the variety of tastes?" said I, rather amused with Mephistophiles' view of the subject.

"Ay, that is rather a stumbling-block," he replied; "yet there are varieties of religion, and religion is taught. The difference will be in cookery as in the church: there will be the orthodox and the heterodox. The most influential party will direct the taste of the court, and attempt to lead that of the people; but there will be dissenters, who will complain of their grievances in not being allowed to dress their leg of mutton in their own fashion; for some abominate turnips, others consider carrots unnecessary, and many possess vital objections to caper sauce. But if law has declared that a leg of mutton shall be dressed one way, the dissenters will be obliged to eat and grumble. Then the court party will raise the cry of constitution and cookery; the dissenters will move earth and heaven to get rid of turnips and carrots, and declaim, with all the energies of life and soul, against the slavery of caper sauce. Then there will be meetings and speeches, dinners and petitions, pamphlets and patriotism. A few matters will be given up by the court party to the clamour which has been raised; they will part with turnips, then with carrots. Their opponents will grow more noisy, and demand greater indulgences: they will strive to be emancipated from the capers; the orthodox will become alarmed for the continuance of their influence; a struggle will commence, which will end in a row. The government will come in to support the supremacy of cookery; and the dissenters will, in the end, be obliged to swallow turnips, carrots, caper sauce, and all, without the leg of mutton!

"There will not only be sects in cookery, but absolute heathens; people who are entirely ignorant of the mystery and importance of roast and boiled. To these will be sent out missionaries, to convert them with the stewpan and the smokejack. Yes, there is an endless variety of tastes. Man's appetite differs in every part of the globe. Some are carnivorous, some are granivorous; some are both, some are neither. A few wish for the general adoption of a vegetable diet, and argue that cabbages and salads produce

virtue and goodness; others are more loudly eloquent in praise of animal food, and find patriotism in a round of beef, and valour in a rump steak. But food has different effects in different climates. The respectable Gentoos live upon rice, and are effeminate fools: the lower Irish starve upon potatoes, and are murderous vagabonds. Nothing is more true than the old proverb, 'What is one man's meat is another's poison.' The Turks chew opium, the Dutch tobacco. The Hampshire boor loves nothing like fat bacon, and the Jew abominates swine's flesh of every denomination. *De gustibus non est disputandum*. The Esquimaux epicures mix sawdust with their train oil. The Laplanders find nothing so delicious as a dish of fir bark and reindeer tallow. Some Japanese delight in a ragout made of scraped whalebone. Rotten eggs, in Cochin China, are eaten as delicacies. A South American tribe, when deprived of fish by the inundations of the Oronoko, feed on balls of a peculiarly nice unctuous clay. The quarrymen of Kiffhæuser spread a similarly rich earth on their cakes, and eat it with the *goût* of a schoolboy who puts sugar on his bread and butter. Sir John Franklin and his companions, in one of their arctic expeditions, made a charming repast off fried bones and old shoes. The Chinese consider a certain bird's nest the greatest delicacy they can enjoy, and they fatten dogs for the table. The people of Madagascar prefer locusts to any other food. Elephants, lions, bears, ants, moths, spiders, snails, rats, serpents, and snakes, are all in turn devoured.

"Everything may be eaten: there is no need of waste. A modern philosopher has discovered that deal boards may be ground into quartern loaves; and, doubtless, somebody equally wise will find out a method by means of which pigs of lead may make excellent hams.

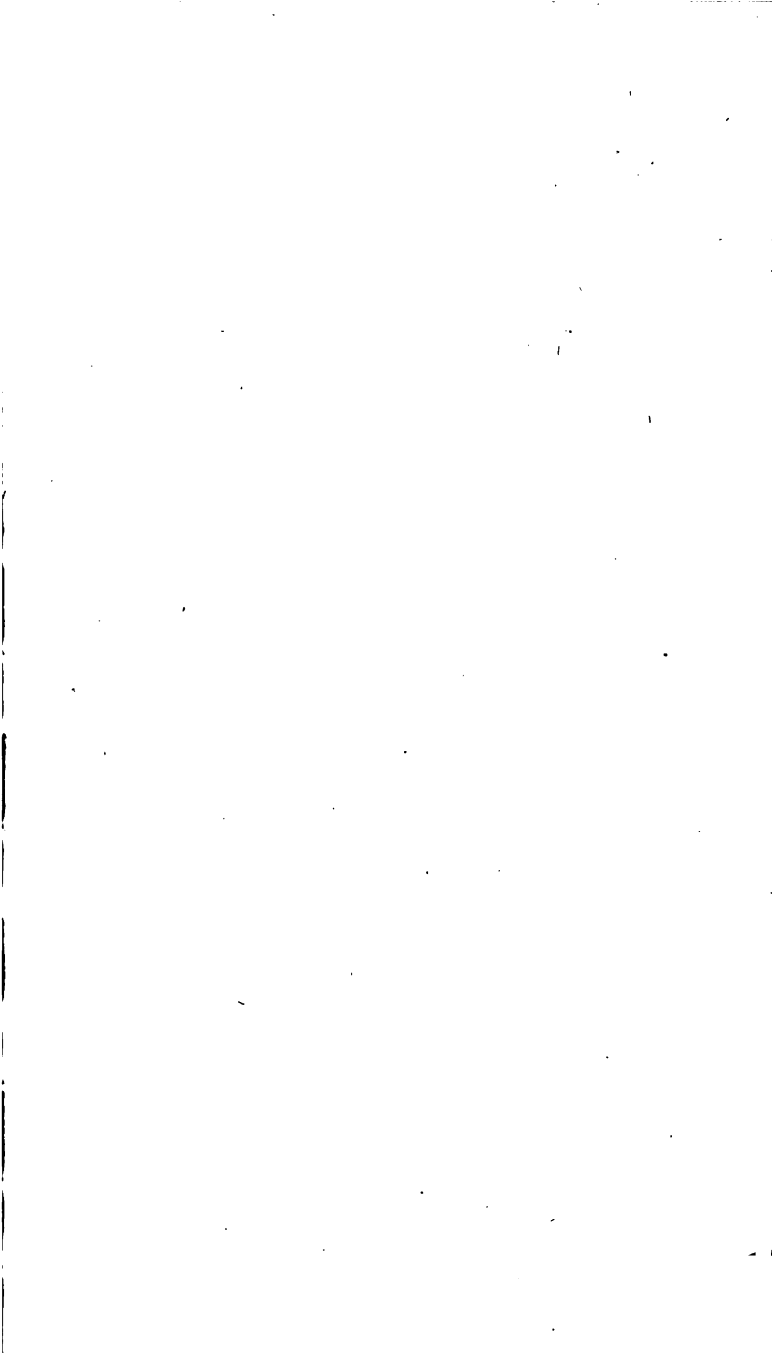
"There is also a vast difference in the modes of cookery pursued by different countries. The Abyssinian cuts his steak out of the living animal, sews up the wound, and drives the convenient larder forward while he makes his meal. The Tartar uses his meat as a saddle, and argues *à posteriori* that food so dressed must eat tender, and become exceedingly savoury. It is the custom of the old people of some of the Battas tribes to ascend a tree, and call together their friends and relations to come and eat them;

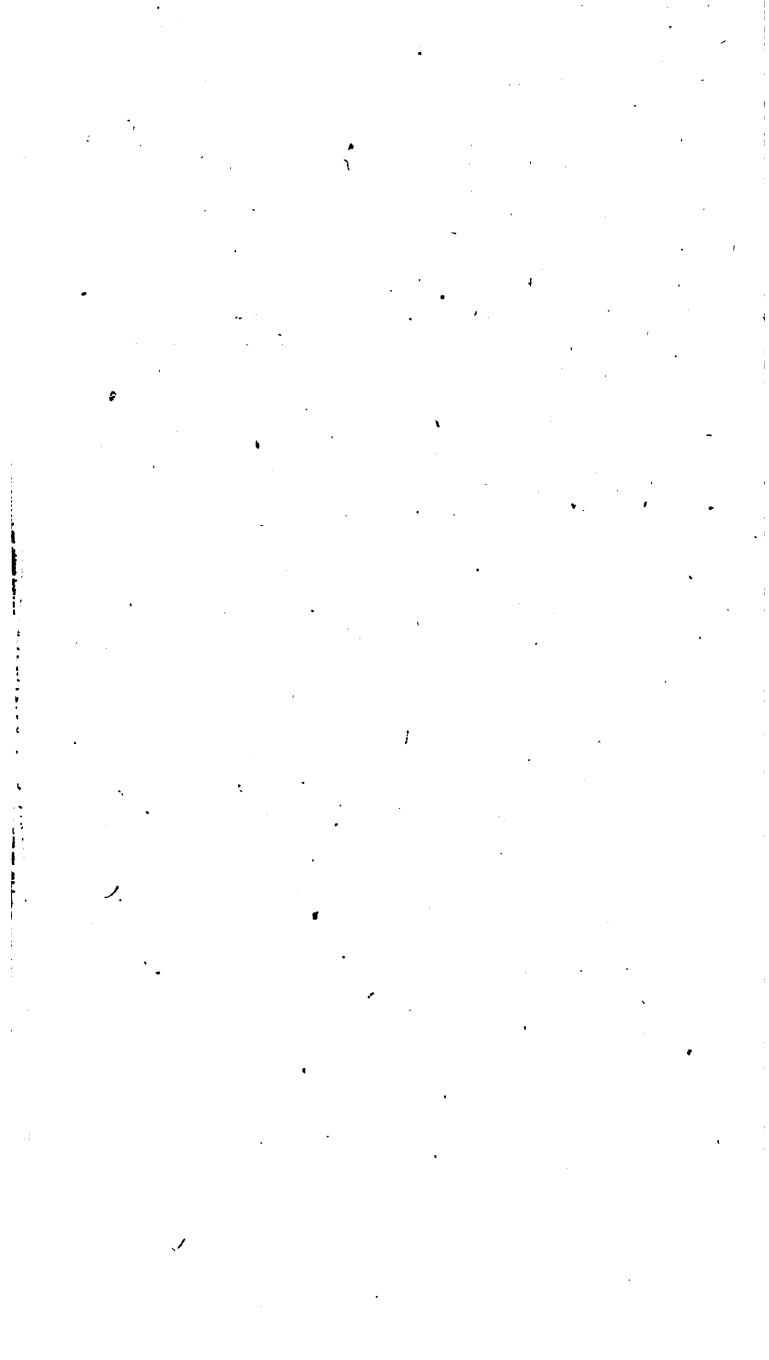
and a Brazilian woman, being at the point of death, a missionary inquired if there was any kind of food she could fancy; but the old lady objected to everything, till at last she confessed that she could pick the little bones of the little hand of a little tender Tapuya boy. At a pinch, the civilized European has been known to stop the ravages of famine with a chop cut from his companion. Some prefer their meat raw, and others will only touch it when done to rags. The Burmese are fond of putrid fish; the Germans delight in putrid vegetables; and the English find the greatest enjoyment in putrid game. Taste changes as frequently as anything else. In the time of Henry the Fifth it was the fashion to eat the porpoise; the subjects of the sanguinary Mary devoured cygnets, storks, and cranes; those of Elizabeth preferred boars' heads and barons of beef. In the reign of Queen Anne some delighted in cats fattened upon oysters, and barbacued hogs. Swans and peacocks have been displaced by larks and wheatears; the John Dory has been pushed out of fashion by the white-bait; and the wholesome meat from the grass-fed beeves of your ancestors has been sacrificed to the greasy flesh of prize oxen, fattened upon oilcake."

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